

-DRAFT-

THE REVISED AND UPDATED
**FALLS CHURCH/
JAMES LEE/SOUTHGATE**
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
AND CONSERVATION PLAN

***Please note that this version shows changes from the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan that was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on May 1, 2006. All insertions into the document are underlined and all deletions from the document are struckthrough.**

Originally adopted December 8, 1980

Amended May 1, 2006

Proposed Amendment November 20, 2006



**Department of Housing
& Community Development**

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Attachment 1: Original Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan

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DRAFT James Lee Conservation Plan—3/1/06

BACKGROUND

The Falls Church, James Lee, Southgate community, known also as simply the James Lee Community, is a residential community located on either side of Annandale Road between Route 50 and Route 29/211. While the majority of the area is located in Fairfax County, a small portion is located within the corporate boundaries of the City of Falls Church. Fairfax County and City of Falls Church have an existing cooperation agreement on housing and community development activities within the City of Falls Church. The James Lee community is bounded on the north by Hillwood Avenue and South Washington Street; on the east by the Hillwood Square Apartments and Whittier Park Town Homes; on the west by the Tripps Run Stream Valley; on the southeast by Clearview Drive and on the southwest by James Lee Street.

The community is characterized by irregular size lots and housing ranging in age from the pre-1900's to post-2000. In terms of property ownership and value, the neighborhood is relatively stable. Real estate sales on single-family detached homes and vacant property have remained relatively constant indicating a low rate of turnover for existing housing and vacant land in the neighborhood. Most vacant lots have sold quickly since 1995 and few undeveloped lots remain. Most new construction is infill residential development on vacant lots or demolition and rebuilding of new homes.

The original Neighborhood Improvement Program that was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on December 8, 1980, provided a comprehensive approach to preserving and improving the James Lee Community as a viable residential neighborhood for a twenty-five year period. Title 36 of the Code of Virginia provides the legal authority for the establishment of Conservation Areas. The Conservation Plan is to provide an outline for the conservation of the area and indicate, among other things, its relationship to local objectives relating to appropriate land uses, improved traffic, public transportation, public utilities, recreational and community facilities, and other public improvements; conditions and limitations on acquisition of property; or any conditions and limitations, including time limitation, under which properties shall be made available for rehabilitation or redevelopment.

The original Neighborhood Improvement Program for the James Lee Community included recommendations for funding public projects, such as road, storm drainage and sidewalk improvements, as well as improvements to the James Lee Community Center and recommendations for joint public and private participation in the Home Improvement Loan Program (HILP). The Conservation Plan and Neighborhood Improvement Program promoted confidence in the future of James Lee by:

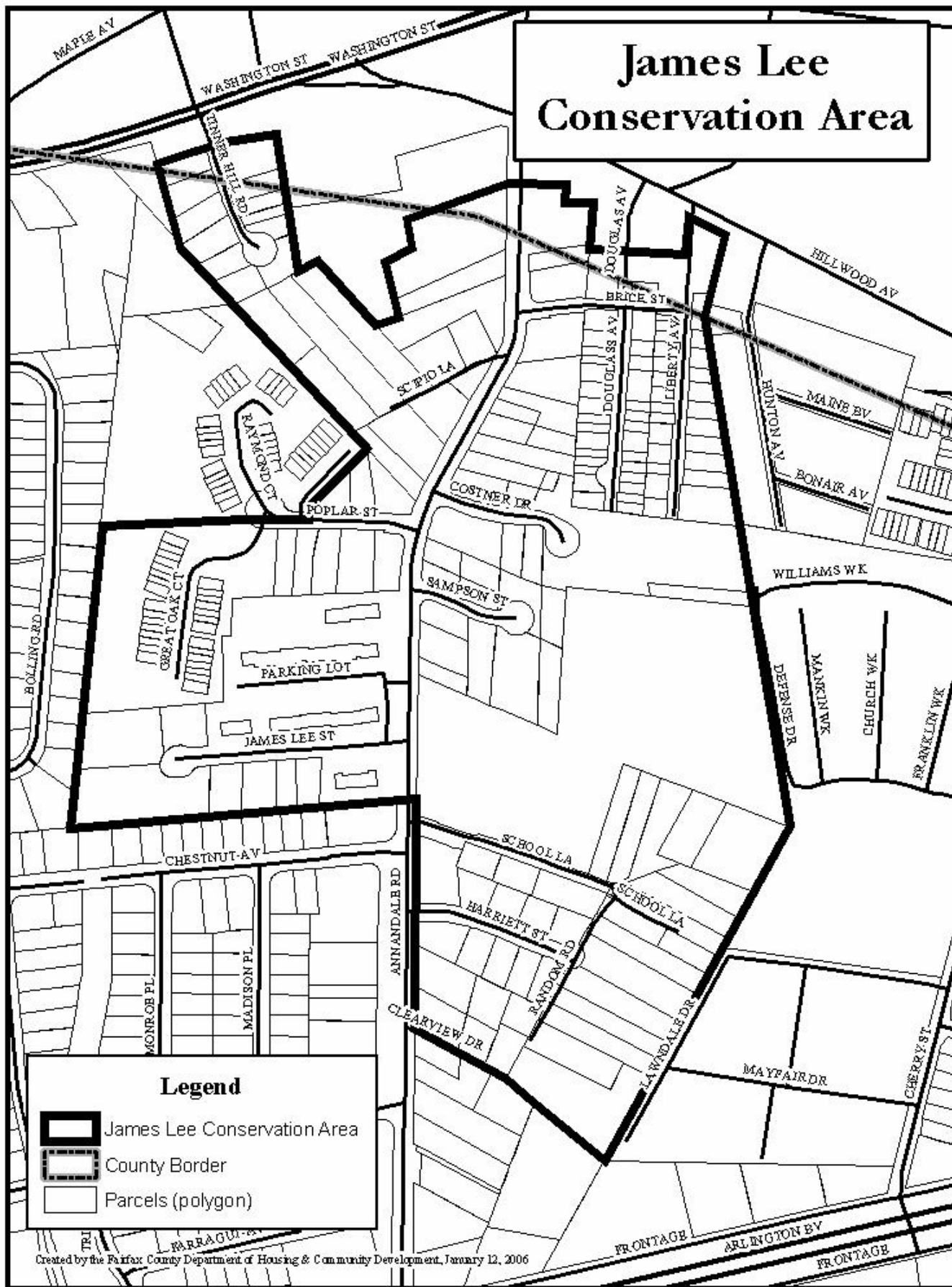
- reducing uncertainty about land use plans for the area;
- providing public improvements which made the neighborhood more attractive and which reinforced a sense of community; and
- made available low-cost financing which provided an incentive to homeowners to improve their property.

The ultimate success of the Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan depended largely on the extent of public and private confidence in the community and on the extent of citizen support for the program. During the twenty-five year period since the adoption of the James Lee Conservation Plan, federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, County General Funds, and Neighborhood Improvement General Obligation Bond funds have been used to complete several road and storm drainage projects and to provide home improvement loans to residents of the James Lee Conservation Area. While much has been accomplished, representatives of the James Lee Community expressed a desire to maintain their Conservation Area status and to update the content of the Conservation Plan. The civic association representing the neighborhood requested that the Conservation Plan be extended in order to continue to address additional needs of their communities.

On November 21, 2005, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors adopted a temporary extension of the James Lee Conservation Plan to allow adequate time for the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) and the Board of Supervisors to hold public hearings on a proposal to amend the James Lee Conservation Plan to extend the expiration date by six months. The Board of Supervisors held a public hearing on that proposed extension amendment on January 9, 2006, and afterward approved the amendment to permit extension of the Plan to June 15, 2006. The FCRHA public hearing occurred on January 12, 2006, and the FCRHA likewise approved the amendment permitting extension of the Plan to June 15, 2006. Since a portion of the Conservation Plan is located in the City of Falls Church, which also adopted the Conservation Plan in 1980, these extensions only applied to the Conservation Plan area within Fairfax County's jurisdiction.

The six-month extension to June 15, 2006 allowed for a revised draft to be completed and community meetings to be held to obtain additional community input, including recommendations that are presented in the final revised Plan. Input was also obtained from the District Supervisor's office and appropriate County agencies such as the Department of Planning and Zoning. Coordination with the City of Falls Church was also undertaken, since a part of the original Conservation Area lay in the City of Falls Church. [A revised and updated James Lee Conservation Plan was adopted by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on May 1, 2006.](#)

[The James Lee community requested additional changes to the Plan, and this revised and updated James Lee Conservation Plan includes further changes to the revised James Lee Conservation Plan that was adopted on May 1, 2006.](#) ~~This plan is an update of the original plan.~~ The effectiveness of the controls, regulations, and standards of the original Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan (Attachment 1) from December 8, 1980 all remain in effect unless superseded by this updated plan.



Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of the Federal Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 is the preservation and development of viable communities by providing funds to localities to meet a series of objectives, which include;

1. the elimination and prevention of blighting influences, deteriorating property, and declining neighborhoods;
2. the elimination of conditions detrimental to health, safety and public welfare;
3. the provision of decent housing and a suitable living environment;
4. the expansion and improvement of the quantity and quality of community services and public facilities; and
5. a more rational utilization of land and natural resources.

Funds allocated [to Fairfax County](#) under the Community Development Block Grant Program can be spent for a variety of activities including the acquisition of property for rehabilitation or for public use, the construction of public facilities and utility systems, the rehabilitation of individual homes, the provision of public services, and the planning and administration costs associated with these activities. Under this framework of eligible activities and general objectives set by the Federal Government, a more definitive set of goals and objectives has been developed for the James Lee community.

Accordingly, the original program proposed that the basic goal of the Neighborhood Improvement Program was the preservation of a viable residential community. The intent of community improvement was defined by five goals – namely, to:

1. Develop a Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan.
2. Improve the quality of life of the existing residents through the implementation of a comprehensive public improvements strategy.
3. Strengthen the residential base of the community by improving the quality of the housing stock.
4. Provide residents the opportunity to obtain suitable affordable housing within their income means.
5. Encourage an ongoing process of citizen participation to ensure active community involvement in the planning process.

Currently, the Neighborhood Improvement Program is being amended to include the following goals – namely, to:

1. Provide additional green space, pocket parks and passive recreational space within the community on underutilized public property in the neighborhood, where available.
2. ~~Encourage future land use that discourages high density commercial business in the community and~~ [Discourage](#) the encroachment and/or expansion of commercial ~~business which is incompatible~~ [uses into residentially zoned land. Commercial development should minimize the impact on and be compatible](#) with the residential community.

Efforts to achieve these seven comprehensive goals for the community have been and can be

made more specific by identifying a number of objectives, which the Neighborhood Improvement Program has been and should continue to be designed to meet. These objectives are grouped below in six categories, as follows:

General:

- Ensure that plans for each project within the community support the overall program goals,
- Establish a set of development and design standards to encourage high standards of quality in the provision of future improvements.

Land Use:

- Conserve the James Lee neighborhood and provide for new residential development at densities compatible with the community. A majority of the Conservation Plan is zoned at R4, which provides for single family detached dwellings at a density not to exceed four (4) dwelling units per acre.
- Promote housing types and development patterns which can minimize the cost of housing and preserve a maximum amount of open space.
- Avoid possible adverse effects of ~~improper or excessive~~ commercial development.
- Stimulate the private rehabilitation of existing dwellings and continue to ensure that the improvements are enduring and of high quality.

Environment:

- Improve the maintenance program of the roads, sidewalks and stormwater drainage systems to provide for more efficient removal of surface water, especially on Costner Drive, the 2700 block of Annandale Road, Annandale Road and Sampson Street. In the City of Falls Church, road, sidewalk, and stormwater maintenance systems will be improved in accordance with the existing and future Capital Improvement Programs. Any proposed storm drainage improvements within the City will need to be reviewed by the City for impacts or conflicts with existing stormwater collection systems.
- Discourage trash dumping on vacant land and provide for the removal and clean up of any areas with litter and trash. In the City of Falls Church litter must be removed through zoning enforcement.
- Improve existing recreational facilities where appropriate.
- Install a playground for elementary school age children at the James Lee Community Center.
- Develop new passive recreational facilities as appropriate.
- Increase the amount of public green space, public gardening space and pocket parks. The City of Falls Church Open Space Report (October 2005) supports greenspace and pocket parks as well as “active recreation”, e.g. cooperative shared-use agreements with surrounding jurisdictions.
- Ensure handicapped accessibility throughout the community center site, including the tot lot, parking areas, etc.
- Encourage business, especially those that are gateways into the community, to keep property clean and to maintain a positive visual appearance.
- ~~Improve the Tripps Run through better drainage and improved mosquito control~~The

[condition of Tripps Run should be improved in accordance with the Cameron Run Watershed Study.](#)

Social:

- Encourage the use of existing community service programs, and provide for the improvement of programs where deficient.
- Provide housing opportunities for a broad range of income and age groups.
- Promote the expansion of public and private social programs for the residents of the area.
- Minimize the impact of the tax burden on residents of low or fixed incomes by encouraging all eligible citizens to utilize the County's or the City's real estate tax relief programs available in both jurisdictions.
- Continue to encourage local citizen leadership and participation in any additional upgrading of the area and in the decision-making process of this plan.
- Encourage existing residents of the area to remain.
- Promote programs to ensure the protection and safety of the residents and their properties.
- Encourage residents who are 65 and older, or permanently and totally disabled, and meet the income and asset eligibility requirements to take advantage of the County's real estate tax relief.

Neighborhood Facilities:

- As appropriate, improve existing community facilities and provide for new facilities.
- Ensure that all citizens in the area are compensated within the requirements of Federal and State law for any federally-funded public actions concerning their real property or households.

Traffic and Circulation:

- As appropriate, [in Fairfax County](#) continue to work with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to improve the safety, conditions, and maintenance of the road and storm drainage system. [The City of Falls Church operates independently from VDOT on road and stormwater maintenance issues. Any proposed traffic improvements within the City will need to be reviewed by the City for impacts on traffic circulation.](#)
- As appropriate, continue to develop a comprehensive program for pedestrian circulation in the community that will provide safe and easy access to the community center, parks, and other neighborhood facilities, by constructing more sidewalks, trails, and bicycle paths.
- Develop a program to provide safety features to slow traffic and discourage cut-through traffic on ~~Douglas~~[Douglass](#) Avenue and Brice Street.

Recommendations

The Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan were approved by the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (hereinafter referred to as the Authority) on October 21, 1980, and adopted by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on December 8,

1980, and the Falls Church Council on November 10, 1980. ~~The Authority and the City of Falls Church (hereinafter referred to as the City) entered into a cooperation agreement dated June 7, 1976, as amended on November 18, 1977, and further amended in 1979 to implement such programs as these.~~

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

A major component of the original Neighborhood Improvement Program was a program to upgrade, replace and construct new public facilities meeting current codes and standards. The public improvement projects were developed with participation by members of the James Lee Neighborhood Improvement Task Force and community at large, who helped identify and provide solutions for community problems. A Master Plan for Public Improvements was developed first which addressed the types of projects that were needed and desired by the community and which delineated the project phases. Following is a description of public improvement projects:

Public Improvement Projects

Following is a description of the projects proposed for the Neighborhood Improvement Program. Those projects were undertaken in stages throughout the life of the program. Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding as well as County General Funds and General Obligation Bonds were used for the projects listed below.

A. Circulation Plan and Improvements

1. Traffic Safety Improvements

The Circulation Plan included studies of street intersections which presented existing or potential circulation conflicts, particularly those with high traffic volumes and narrow rights of way and those with visual blind spots.

2. Sidewalk Construction

Sidewalks were constructed as part of the neighborhood improvement projects throughout the community on every street where the property owners requested them.

B. Storm Drainage Improvements

Storm drainage improvements were constructed as part of the neighborhood improvement projects throughout the community on every street where the road, curb and gutter improvements were installed.

C. Community Center

The James Lee Community Center has been renovated and expanded to include a 23,000 square foot addition. The school renovation provided for the expansion of existing social and recreation programs operated by the Fairfax County Department of Community and Recreation

Services, for programs operated by the Northern Virginia Literacy Council, as well as for space for the Park Authority's Archaeology Services division. The newly renovated community center also houses a new senior center, teen center, day care center, fitness center, arts and crafts area, community theatre, multipurpose recreational complex, commercial kitchen, administrative offices, and storage space. In addition, site improvements included additional parking, landscaping, exterior lighting, road frontage improvements along School Lane, renovation of the athletic fields, ~~tennis courts~~, multipurpose court and tot lot.

Neighborhood Improvement Program

From the beginning, the foundation of the Neighborhood Improvement Program was based on community input, participation, consensus, support and feedback. The main purpose of the program was to preserve and improve this older, yet stable residential community of predominantly single family homes, to prevent it from becoming deteriorated, to stabilize property values, to maintain the stock of moderately priced housing, and to prevent the encroachment of commercial development into the area.

As a start, a circulation plan and master plan were prepared with community participation for the area in the early 1980's. In addition, throughout the 1980's, numerous renovations were made to the community center, including the installation of a commercial kitchen, storage facility, gymnasium, playgrounds and tot lots, as well as parking lot and incidental site improvements.

The neighborhood improvement program itself was developed with a great deal of community participation from the early 1980's and implemented over a twenty-year period, with the last phase being completed in 2004. The projects consisted of community planning, engineering design, land acquisition primarily of easements and dedications, and construction of four phases of road and storm drainage improvements throughout the community. As part of the projects, utilities were not only relocated but were also replaced, upgraded and improved. In addition, sidewalks were provided on streets where ~~the property owners wanted them~~ [sufficient land rights were available](#). A fifth phase was designed, and included three privately-owned streets - namely, Clearview Drive, Random Road, and Scipio Lane, but was not constructed due to insufficient land rights.

The four phases of neighborhood improvements were as follows:

Phase I consisted of road, storm drainage and sidewalk improvements on Sampson Street, Costner Drive and along Annandale Road, and was completed in 1988.

Phase II consisted of road and storm drainage improvements on Tinner Hill Road, and was completed in 1990.

Phase III consisted of road and storm drainage improvements on Brice Street, Liberty Avenue and ~~Douglas~~ [Douglass](#) Avenue, and was completed in 1994.

Phase IV consisted of road and storm drainage improvements on Harriett Street and

James Lee Street, and was completed in 2004. School Lane had been included in this project phase, but was omitted at the requests of property owners' residing on that street.

Upon completion of each project phase, the roadways were accepted into the state roadway system for ownership and continued maintenance. Three of the roads in James Lee are unimproved private roads. They are Scipio Lane, Random Road, and Clearview Drive. In order for these roads to have been improved with public funds, the roads had to remain open to the public for public street purposes, necessitating agreement by 100% of the property owners, which could not be obtained.

LAND USE AND HOUSING

Land Use

The basic concept of the Neighborhood Improvement Program is to continue to preserve James Lee as a residential community, to prevent the area from deteriorating physically, and to provide for its improvement in the future. In order to accomplish the objectives, it is recommended that existing land uses be preserved, and that future housing development including infill development in the community be at the same general density as the existing neighborhood. For this reason, the Conservation Plan is based on the densities and uses defined in the County Comprehensive Plan and its amendments, other County ordinances and codes, and the City of Falls Church Comprehensive Plan.

~~In certain areas, therefore, it~~ It is recommended that infill development of vacant land should be at the same or similar residential ~~use~~ density. This would encourage new construction at a level which would not negatively impact traffic or increase parking problems within the community, and that would maintain the quality of life for existing residents. This recommendation is in conformance with the Neighborhood Improvement Program objectives of encouraging increased housing opportunities; providing for new residential development at densities compatible with the community, yet which adequately reflect existing land values and locational advantages; and promoting housing types and development patterns which can limit the cost of housing and yet preserve an adequate amount of open space. It is also recommended that any new commercial or office uses be confined to the business district along Washington Street and Hillwood Avenue. Institutional uses, such as schools, parks, churches, etc., shall remain as currently designated.

These recommendations are in response to the expressed desires of the community and in response to the Neighborhood Improvement Program objective of preserving the area as a sound and viable residential community. Furthermore, they are consistent with the Area I Comprehensive Plan recommendation that James Lee remain a "predominantly residential community". The recommendations are also consistent with the City of Falls Church Comprehensive Plan which establishes a general policy to maintain the City's basic residential character.

Excerpt from the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2003 Edition, Jefferson Planning

District, Amended through 12-6-2004, J1-Hillwood Community Planning Sector

(For the most current version of this section of the Plan please visit
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area1/jefferson.pdf>)

CHARACTER

The Hillwood Community Planning Sector generally extends from the intersection of Hillwood Avenue and Arlington Boulevard at Seven Corners to Tripps Run which forms the western boundary.

The eastern portion of the sector lies within the Seven Corners Community Business Center (CBC). South Street serves as a barrier between the stable residential neighborhoods to the west and the CBC. Housing is largely comprised of single-family detached units. A substantial area of multi-family housing is located west of Cherry Street. The remainder of the sector is stable and in predominantly single-family residential uses. There is a mix of commercial, institutional and high density residential uses along the Route 50 and the Annandale Road corridors, and along the Falls Church City line. Jefferson Village Shopping Center is located at the intersection of Route 50 and Annandale Road. A commercial strip with primarily retail uses extends along the Route 50 service drive between Jefferson Village and the Seven Corners CBC. Many of these retail uses are located in houses converted to commercial uses.

The western boundary of the sector is a channelized segment of the Tripps Run stream valley. The southern portion of the stream valley has been acquired by the County.

James Lee Conservation Area

The James Lee community is located adjacent to the City of Falls Church, west of the Seven Corners Shopping Center. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the Falls Church City Council approved and adopted the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan in December 1980. The Conservation Area is generally bounded by Hillwood Avenue on the north, Tripps Run stream valley on the west, Whittier Intermediate School, and Hillwood Square Apartments on the east, Clearview Drive on the southeast, and James Lee Street on the southwest. The Conservation Plan was developed in order to reverse the trend toward deterioration and to preserve the assets of the James Lee neighborhood. It includes recommendations on storm drainage, street lighting, and road improvements.

Hillwood Community Improvement Area

On November 24, 1986, the Board of Supervisors adopted the Hillwood Community Improvement Plan to upgrade and preserve this neighborhood by installing curbs and gutters, and making sidewalk, road, and storm drainage improvements. Homeowners participated in the

design of improvements and shared in the cost. The area is generally bounded by Hillwood Avenue, South Street, Route 50, and Cherry Street.

CONCEPT FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The Concept for Future Development recommends the areas of Hillwood Planning Sector develop in Suburban Neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Land Use

The Hillwood sector is largely developed as stable residential neighborhoods. Infill development in these neighborhoods should be of a compatible use, type and intensity in accordance with the guidance provided by the Policy Plan under Land Use Objectives 8 and 14.

Where substantial parcel consolidation is specified, it is intended that such consolidations will provide for projects that function in a well-designed, efficient manner and provide for the development of unconsolidated parcels in conformance with the Area Plan.

Figure 8 indicates the geographic location of land use recommendations for this sector. Where recommendations are not shown on the General Locator Map, it is so noted.

1. South Street serves as the western boundary of the Seven Corners commercial area. Commercial encroachment into adjacent neighborhoods should be discouraged. [Not shown]
2. The commercial strip along the north side and fronting on Route 50 between Cherry Street and Cleave Road is planned for neighborhood-serving retail and office uses up to .25 FAR. Commercial development should be limited to the present configuration, with the remainder of the strip being maintained as well-buffered stable single-family residential uses. Special use permits and special exceptions in this corridor should generally be discouraged in order to maintain the residential character of the adjacent single-family neighborhood and to prevent commercial encroachment.
3. The present boundary of the commercial area along Annandale Road (north of Route 50) and fronting on the north side of Route 50 should be maintained. This area is planned for community-serving retail uses up to .35 FAR. Substantial buffering should be provided between the residential and non-residential uses. Redevelopment/revitalization of these areas should provide substantial buffering to the adjacent residential neighborhoods. Infill development in the single-family detached residential area north of Parcel 50-4((1))28 is planned at 3-4 dwelling units per acre.
4. The area which fronts the north side of Route 50 at the northwest quadrant of Route 50 and Annandale Road, just west of the Jefferson Village Shopping Center is planned for single-family residential with an alternative to convert existing single-family structures to office use. As an option, these parcels (Tax Map 50-4((13))(2)9-14) could be consolidated and

redeveloped for townhouse office or low-rise office uses up to .25 FAR, not to exceed 40 feet in height. These parcels should provide a transition to residential development to the north and stabilize the western boundary of the designated commercial area as East Tripps Run Road.

5. Development of the remaining vacant land within and adjacent to the James Lee Conservation Area should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the James Lee Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan.
6. Parcels fronting on Tinnors Hill Road are planned for residential use at 3-4 dwelling units per acre. As an option, residential development at 8-12 dwelling units per acre may be appropriate if the following conditions are met:
 - Consolidation of all parcels fronting on Tinnors Hill Road and adjacent Parcels 50-2((1))6 and 34; and
 - Substantial buffering should be provided to mitigate any noise impact from Route 29.
7. Recommendations for the area between Tinnors Hill Road and Tripps Run and the adjacent areas, fronting on the south side of Route 29 are addressed in Sector J9.
8. Tax Map Parcel 50-2((1))29 is planned for residential use at 3 to 4 dwelling units per acre. Abutting this property is Tax Map Parcel 50-2((1))40, which is zoned C-8, the only property located within the James Lee Conservation District zoned commercial. In order to avoid commercial encroachment, there should be no expansion of commercial uses into the adjacent residential areas of the James Lee Conservation Area.

Transportation

Transportation recommendations for this sector are shown on Figure 9. In some instances, site-specific transportation recommendations are included in the land use recommendations section. The figures show access orientation, circulation plans, interchange impact areas and generalized locations of proposed transit facilities. The recommendations contained in the Area Plan text and maps, the Policy Plan and Transportation Plan map, policies and requirements in the Public Facilities Manual, the Zoning Ordinance, and other standards will be utilized in the evaluation of development proposals.

Public Facilities

Expand the James Lee Community Center by 6,400 square feet and renovate approximately 3,000 square feet of the existing facility.

Parks and Recreation

Park and recreation recommendations for this sector are shown on Figure 10. The column "Park Classification" includes existing park facilities. The "Recommendations" column includes entries for both existing and proposed facilities. Prior to developing parkland, the Fairfax County

Park Authority initiates a master planning process to determine the appropriate facilities and design for that park. This process involves extensive citizen review and participation. If an existing park is listed but no recommendation appears on that line, it means the park has been developed in accordance with its master plan.

Trails

Trails planned for this sector are delineated on Figure 11 and on the 1":4,000' Countywide Trails Plan Map which is referenced as Figure 2 in the Transportation element of the Policy Plan and is available at the Maps and Publications Sales Desk. Trails in this sector are an integral part of the overall County system. While some of the segments have already been constructed, the Countywide Trails Plan Map portrays the ultimate system for the sector and the County at large. In addition, the map specifies a classification for each segment, which represents the desired ultimate function and surface type of the trail. Specific construction requirements are detailed in the Public Facilities Manual.

Excerpt from the 2005 City of Falls Church Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Chapter, section on South Washington Street Corridor.

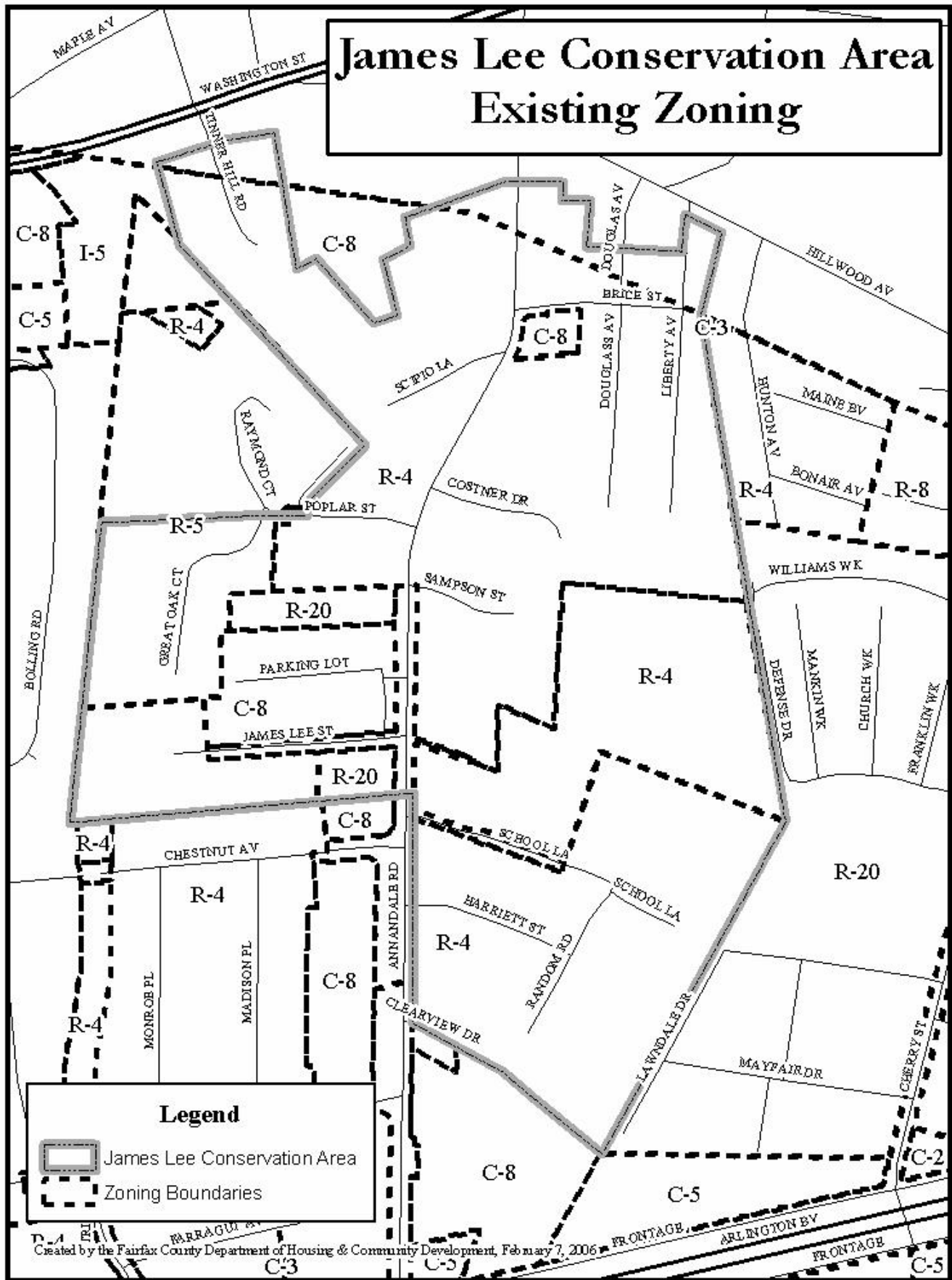
In response to property owner requests to retain the residential nature of this small area, a land use designation change was made on two lots on Tinner's Hill south of South Washington Street. The designation changes are shown in Figure 4-14 as change numbers 1 and 2 from "Business" to "Low Density Residential (4.0)". A Conservation Plan (adopted in Fairfax County in 1980) for the James Lee area states the importance of the preservation of the residential character of this community, and provided another basis for this change. Some of the primary goals of this Conservation Plan are to stabilize the residential community, limit any commercial activity to Hillwood Avenue, and preserve the community's assets.

There is presently no unified development theme for this area and assertive planning measures are needed. The City's Design Guidelines should be followed when redevelopment is considered for this area. The following land use and design recommendations should be adhered to in this area:

- Consolidate lots to accommodate higher density development
- ~~■ Consider the vacation of Shirley and Gibson Street rights-of-way to increase the land area available for redevelopment. The development that fronts on Gundry Drive, Rollins Street, and South Virginia Avenue, should be effectively buffered from commercial areas.~~
- ~~■ Consider the vacation or realignment of South Maple Avenue if redevelopment is proposed that consolidates parcels on both sides of the street.~~
- Preserve and rehabilitate the cab company structure and triangle bounded by South

Washington Street, Annandale Road, and Hillwood Avenue. Streetscape improvements and better screening of the parking lot are recommended for this property.

- Preserve and use effective site planning and landscaping in the vicinity of the Galloway United Methodist Church.
- Retain Tower Square Shopping Center as some type of neighborhood shopping facility, which provides important locally serving commercial activities.
- Promote redevelopment that eliminates stand alone automobile storage facilities.
- Improve pedestrian accessibility with controlled crosswalks at various locations on South Washington Street. Close coordination with Fairfax County is necessary to assure consistency in design and implementation on both sides of South Washington Street.
- Create a consistent design, in terms of building height and design, streetscape improvements, and other aspects of the built environment for parcels located in the City and in Fairfax County in the South Washington Street corridor.
- Preserve historic resources in the Tinner's Hill area.
- Create development to promote a positive image of the City as part of a gateway.
- Locate buildings as close to South Washington Street as possible with parking located in the rear or on the sides of buildings or in structured facilities.
- Achieve consistent architectural goals (building materials, window types, roof overhangs, roof pitch, and porches).



James Lee Conservation Area
Existing Land Use

Legend

- James Lee Conservation Area
- Commercial
- Multi-Family Residential
- Other
- Public
- Single Family Residential
- Parks

Created by the Fairfax County Department of Housing & Community Development, February 7, 2006

Housing

Home Improvement Loan Program

Housing rehabilitation is an essential part of maintaining older neighborhoods as desirable residential communities. As a central part of the Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan, the County, the Authority and the City will work to upgrade and to stabilize the existing residential neighborhood through the provision of home improvement loans, including deferred trusts with no monthly payments if the homeowner qualifies. The loan is repaid when the house is sold, the title is transferred or the home is refinanced. These loans are provided using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds [allocated to Fairfax County](#).

The County undertook repeated efforts of outreach in the community. As documented in the original James Lee Conservation Plan, in April, 1979, a windshield survey of the structural conditions of the housing in the James Lee community was conducted indicating that slightly over 50% of the single-family houses in the area were need of some repair. A windshield survey conducted in January, 2006 (referred to later in this document) revealed that only approximately 10% of the housing stock was found to be in need of repair. The Home Improvement Loan Program (HILP) has helped bring this figure down. Through the years, 19 HILP loans have closed in the James Lee area.

This program is designed to provide for extensive improvements by:

- offering loans which will be within reach of persons of modest income, or at rates which will provide an incentive to participate; and
- enlisting the participation of private lending institutions in order to increase the amount of available capital. At the time of the original Conservation Plan, more than half of the respondents to the James Lee questionnaire were interested in home improvement loans and/or grants. Home maintenance and repair were frequently identified as significant problems, and numerous homes in the area have since been renovated.

Housing Production

The Authority, under the powers of the Conservation Plan, should continue to assist in the provision of new moderate-priced housing to increase and improve the housing stock available for persons of modest income. The objective has been to encourage developers of vacant land within the community to include moderate-priced housing units of various sizes and types of units, as a part of their respective development plans. The Authority can assist private enterprise in the provision of moderate-priced housing by:

- providing assistance through the Affordable Housing Partnership Program or other Federal and State financing programs for both new construction and rehabilitation;
- working directly with area lending institutions getting financing for qualified projects

The infusion of new residential housing in the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate neighborhood will further serve to attain the goal of developing a viable community as well as

ensuring the permanence of the community.

Historic Preservation

Community residents have expressed an interest in the preservation of the historical features of the area, specifically the preservation of the cemeteries located behind Galloway Methodist Church and Second Baptist Church. It is recommended that such preservation activities be pursued under the Neighborhood Improvement Program in order to preserve and enhance the historical character of James Lee. In addition the neighborhood would like to include the Third Baptist Church, with the consultation of the church, for consideration of placement in the County's Inventory of Historic Sites.

Implementation

The primary responsibility for the implementation of the program rested with the citizens of James Lee. It was essential that residents undertook the upgrading of their own neighborhood concurrent with the public improvement projects. The activities of the County, the Authority, and the City were designed to be supportive of individual actions, and to provide an impetus for continuing citizen involvement in the program. These public activities were limited to the following:

1. The installation, construction, or reconstruction of streets, utilities, parks, parking facilities, playgrounds, public buildings, and other public facilities essential to the Neighborhood Improvement Program.
2. The provision of assistance to property owners or occupants within the Conservation Area to improve their property by providing loans and grants directed toward the prevention and elimination of blight.
3. The acquisition of property for the purpose of rehabilitating housing or providing a public use, such as a public green space, parks or sidewalks. Acquisition was limited by Section V of the Conservation Plan for the County only. Transactions between an owner and the Authority were to have been on the basis of voluntary agreement. The use of eminent domain powers by the Authority were limited to acquiring properties located in the Fairfax County portion of the Conservation Area for the uses as permitted under Title 36 of the Code of Virginia. The Authority could buy and rehabilitate property offered to it by private owners, and then sell the property on the open market to persons who would reside in the structure for a least one (1) year. New development would, of course, be allowed to occur through normal actions of the private sector, but all development would take place within the framework of the Conservation Plan and established planning and zoning so that new development would be compatible with and beneficial to the entire community. All property owners or occupants would receive the full benefits where applicable of the Federal Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, as applicable, and state law including fair market value of all property acquired as established by independent appraisal.
4. The disposition of land or improvements to further the objectives of the Neighborhood Improvement Program. Cooperation between the County and the City of Falls Church and the Authority was to expand the funding options available to implement the Neighborhood Improvement Program. This would have made it possible to increase the

sources of funding for public improvements and extend credit to private property owners. One or more of the following sources of funding would be used to implement the projects described above.

- Federal and State grant funds, including but not limited to Community Development Block Grant funds;
- Bonds and notes issued by the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority;
- Bonds and notes issued by the County or the City of Falls Church in accordance with applicable laws;
- Appropriation of County or City general revenues; and
- General Obligation Bonds.

Through the provision of community facilities and home improvement loans, the area would be enhanced by the voluntary participation of its residents and the private market.

Coordination and Responsibilities of Public Agencies

The County, the City, and all their agencies, authorities, boards, and commissions will cooperate with and assist the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority in the implementation of the Falls Church, James Lee, Southgate Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan, as provided in Section III of the Conservation Plan, as amended. The County and the City of Falls Church shall carry out those activities for which each is legally enabled and which constitute its usual function. All other activities called for in the Program and Plan which cannot be carried out by the County and the City shall be the responsibility of the Authority. Overall coordination of the implementation of the Program, including coordination with the State and its agencies, shall be the responsibility of the Executive Secretary of the Authority, who is also the County Executive, where activities are solely within the county, and shall include coordination efforts by the City where appropriate. The County Executive works under the direction of the Board of Supervisors and the Authority, through the Department of Housing and Community Development. Coordination as it involves the City shall be the responsibility of the City Manager under the direction of the City Council and through the appropriate City Department.

Of particular benefit to the James Lee community will be coordination between the County and the City involving shared concerns. These concerns include zoning and policing to help protect the neighborhood.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Housing in Need of Repair

On January 19, 2006, staff of the Department of Housing and Community Development conducted a windshield survey of the James Lee Conservation Area to assess the physical condition of the existing housing stock and the need for the continuation of the Home Improvement Loan Program (HILP). The survey revealed that approximately ten percent (10%) of the housing stock may require the type of improvements which are eligible under the program.

The actual need may vary as HILP also includes various interior improvements and HILP applicants must have incomes which fall below the Fairfax County median income for family size.

B. Lower Income Levels and Property Values

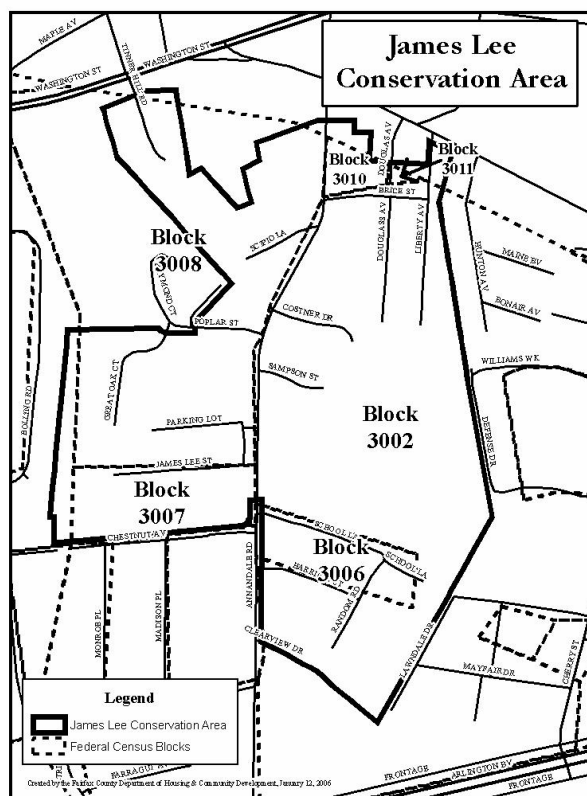
The trend of lower median family income levels in the James Lee area compared to the rest of the County has continued from 1970 through 2000. According to the 2000 Census, the median family income for the James Lee area was \$48,854, considerably lower than all of Fairfax County at \$92,146 or all of the City of Falls Church at \$97,225. In addition, compared to Fairfax County or Falls Church as a whole, housing values in the James Lee area have been significantly lower. The 2000 Census showed that the median housing value for owner-occupied units in the James Lee area is \$158,800, compared to \$233,300 for the County as a whole and \$277,100 for the City of Falls Church.

C. Types of Housing

According to the 2000 Census, approximately* 1,392 people live in the James Lee area and occupy 487 of the 504 housing units for an average household size of 2.6. Additionally, 61% of the residents own their home compared to the 39% who rent.

Blocks	3002	3006	3007	3008	3010	3011	Total
Population	532	19	120	719	0	2	1,392
# Housing Units	220	4	36	243	0	1	504
Owner Occupied	118	3	27	150	0	1	299
Renter Occupied	90	1	8	89	0	0	188
Average Household Size	2.56	4.75	3.43	3.01	0	2.0	2.625

*Census Blocks do not follow the boundaries of the James Lee Conservation Plan (see map)



PROPOSED PROJECTS

1) Tinner Hill Cultural Center – A Community-Proposed Project

The Tinner Hill Heritage Foundation, Inc. plans to construct the Tinner Hill Cultural Center on a site consisting of two ¼ acre lots that lie in both the City of Falls Church and Fairfax County. The site is located at 106 and 108 Tinner Hill Road. The purpose of the Cultural Center is to portray the issues and lives of African-Americans who lived through the time period in the United States when Jim Crow laws and segregation were present and when African-Americans responded by demanding that their civil rights be honored.

Two primary buildings are being planned. The main building will reflect the architecture of the Joseph Tinner home. Its function will be that of a museum and educational facility, a meeting space for discussions of civil rights issues, a social events gathering place, and office space for the Tinner Hill Heritage Foundation. The second building will be a performance center, designed to look like a 1915-era rural barn on the outside. Inside, the center will contain a fully-equipped stage for the performing arts. Barn activities will also include a stage for outdoor concerts, living history, and lectures; utilizing the indoor space for a practice and work area for small groups to use for rehearsals; and having the indoor area function as a small exhibit hall.

The site where the Tinner Hill Heritage Foundation is planning to build the Cultural Center is designated by the Commonwealth of Virginia as one of 31 African-American historical sites in Virginia. It is the site of the home of Joseph Tinner, a stonemason, and is where the first rural branch in the United States of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P) met in 1915. A new segregation law had been passed by the Town of Falls Church that required African-Americans to live in a small area of town, while white Americans could live in most of the town. The group of African-Americans that met developed a legal strategy to abolish the law. Risking their lives and livelihoods during this time of racial tension, this group fought for the principles of civil rights with the result that the law was ultimately revoked. The Falls Church branch of the N.A.A.C.P. grew and helped organize other branches throughout Northern Virginia and the rural South. Prior to the Civil War, the site was also a home to slaves of the Dulany Plantation.

~~A study should be completed to determine if new infrastructure facilities or expansion or the upgrade of existing infrastructure should be completed in anticipation of the construction and opening of the Tinner Hill Heritage Cultural Center. Increased automobile traffic on a daily basis is not anticipated.~~

2) Establishment of Pocket Parks and Community Trails

The James Lee Conservation Area could potentially benefit from some additional amenities, including pocket parks, community parks, and community trails for walking and biking. Assuming property owner concurrence and the ability to obtain necessary land rights and maintenance agreements, mini or pocket parks could be developed on vacant parcels within the Conservation Area that have been declared uneconomic remnants from real property acquisition

for the neighborhood improvement project phases. One such location is the southwest corner of Brice Street and Liberty Avenue in Phase III. Another opportunity for a community park can be seen on the former Williams' property located along Annandale Road between Harriett Street and School Lane, across from the Community Center. Community trails could be constructed as needed throughout the Conservation Area for safer walking and biking, separating pedestrian and vehicular access. Walking and/or biking routes could be extended in various areas, such as from the end of Costner Drive toward the James Lee Community Center, and along Annandale Road in areas where there are no sidewalks, as is the case in the block between Brice Street and Hillwood Avenue. Proposed land uses for the pocket parks could include tot lots green space, and in particular the Williams' property could include a picnic area.

3) Continuation of the Home Improvement Loan Program

Fairfax County will continue to offer its Home Improvement Loan Program (HILP) to eligible residents of the Conservation Area. HILP loans, utilizing Community Development Block Grant funds, can take the form of deferred trusts with no monthly payments for qualified homeowners as well as low-interest loans. HILP loans provide opportunities for residents to rehabilitate their individual properties while also accomplishing the larger effect of maintaining the neighborhood as a desirable residential community.

4) James Lee Community Center Recreation and Site Improvements

Additional recreational facilities or improvement of current facilities located at James Lee Community Center have been identified by the James Lee/Southgate Civic Association Task Force. A walking trail to begin at the end of Costner Drive and ~~connect~~connecting the baseball fields ~~and~~ tennis ~~court with~~courts, the Community Center, and the surrounding community is needed. The tennis court should be renovated and include the replacement of a tennis backboard wall that was removed during the renovation of the James Lee Community Center ~~should be undertaken~~. The installation of a playground for elementary school age children is desperately needed as well. The existing tot lot is in need of accessibility modifications since its relocation during construction of the community center project. Accessibility modifications are needed in various locations around the community center site, parking lot and sidewalks.

5) Traffic Safety Improvements

Two intersections were identified by citizens as problem areas. These were the intersections of Annandale Road and Costner Drive, and Brice Street and Annandale Road. Hazardous road conditions have also been identified in front of #2761, #2800, #2767, and #306 Annandale Road. Residents have reported damage caused by automobiles failing to negotiate the sharp curve in the road alignment and public safety issues at Metro bus stops with pedestrians trying to cross the street to catch public transportation. In addition, the neighborhood would like to see a traffic flow study done to identify possible measures, such as signage, street lights, and traffic light operations, to improve traffic safety in the area. In particular, the neighborhood would like to examine the feasibility of a caution or traffic light at the corner of Costner and Annandale Road.

Street crossings should also be provided at points where there is a heavy pedestrian flow and

added safety features for people crossing Annandale Road at Metro bus stops and in front of Galloway United Methodist Church. In particular, the intersection of Washington Street and Tinner Hill Road and the area in front of #306 Annandale Road need crosswalks to provide for pedestrians, especially children, going to and from public transportation or the future cultural center located on Tinner Hill. Sidewalks should be located on at least one side of each street in the Conservation Area and crosswalks need to connect to sidewalks whenever possible.

Cooperation between the City of Falls Church, Fairfax County and Other Agencies and Authorities

Fairfax County, the City of Falls Church and other local agencies and authorities shall aid and cooperate with the Authority under the powers of the Code of Virginia for the purpose of assisting the development and administration of the Conservation Plan. ~~The City has in existing cooperation agreement with the Authority which has been amended to reflect cooperation in the area of implementation of this Plan.~~ The City will designate the appropriate department to carry out the work in the areas of street improvements and housing rehabilitation for the City.

REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS FOR THE CITY OF FALLS CHURCH & FAIRFAX COUNTY

The following controls and regulations relating to land use and building requirements provide guidelines and review procedures which are intended to maximize efforts to preserve the residential character of the Conservation Area. Ingenuity and freedom of design are encouraged for all improvements and new developments as long as they remain consistent with the objectives of the Neighborhood Improvement Program. Unless otherwise stated below, all capital improvement projects will be constructed or improved in accordance with the Conservation Plan, Neighborhood Improvement Program, and all applicable state and local ordinances and codes.

Development Review

All of the requests, plans and proposals identified below will be forwarded by the County or City to the Authority for appropriate review and comment. Specific procedures have been documented to distinguish the various requirements of the City of Falls Church from those of Fairfax County. The Authority shall follow all regulations, limitations, and time schedules of the County and the City in reviewing and commenting on said documents. The Authority shall work with a committee designated by the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Civic Association in carrying out all reviews called for in this section of the Conservation Plan.

1. CITY: Zoning Actions - As part of the standard review procedure, the City shall provide notice to the Authority of all rezoning requests, special use permit requests, variances or special exception requests for properties that are wholly or partially within the Conservation Plan as well as those within 150 feet of the adopted Conservation Area boundaries. Said notice shall be provided ~~at least fifteen (15) days prior to a public hearing on~~ within two weeks of acceptance of such requests by the

City ~~Planning Commission or Board of Zoning Appeals~~ and for any subsequent amendments to the initial proposal. Following said notice, the Authority will coordinate the review of such requests by the community's Civic Association and will submit appropriate comments to the City Planning Department at or prior to the public hearing.

All comments submitted by the Authority shall be incorporated into the related reports presented by the City staff to the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals and the City Council.

COUNTY: Zoning Actions – As part of the standard review procedure the County shall provide notice to the Authority of all rezoning requests, special use permit requests, variances and special exception requests for properties that are wholly or partially within as well as those within 350 feet of the adopted Conservation Area boundaries. Said notice shall be provided within one week of the ~~receipt~~ acceptance of such requests by the County. Following said notice, the Authority will coordinate the review of such requests by the community's Civic Association and will submit appropriate comments to the County within thirty (30) days. All comments submitted by the Authority shall be incorporated into the related reports presented by the County staff to the Planning Commission, ~~and~~ the Board of Supervisors, or the Board of Zoning Appeals.

2. CITY: Comprehensive Planning Actions - The City Planning Department shall provide notice to the Authority of all proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments affecting properties ~~within wholly~~ or ~~adjacent to or partially~~ within 350 the Conservation Plan as well as those within 150 feet of the adopted Conservation Area boundaries. Said notice shall be provided ~~no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the consideration of such amendments by~~ within two weeks of acceptance of such requests by the City and for any subsequent amendments to the Planning Commission initial proposal. Following said notice the Authority, with a Civic Association Committee, shall review and provide appropriate comment on the proposed amendments. All such comments shall be incorporated in the related reports submitted by the City staff to the Planning Commission and the City Council.

COUNTY: Comprehensive Planning Actions - The Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ), shall provide notice to the Director of the Authority of all proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments affecting properties that are wholly or partially within ~~or adjacent to or~~ as well as those within 350 feet of the adopted Conservation Area boundaries. Said notice shall be provided within ~~thirty fifteen (30)~~ thirty (30) days of the acceptance of such requests by ~~the County DPZ~~. Following said notice, the Authority will coordinate the review of such requests by the community's Civic Association and will submit appropriate comments to ~~the County DPZ~~ within ~~thirty (30) days~~ sixty (60) days prior to consideration of such amendments by the Planning Commission. All such comments shall be ~~incorporated in the related reports submitted by the County staff to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors~~ available to the public and will be considered in the staff analyses of the Plan amendment.

3. CITY: Development and Site Plans - The City Planning Department shall provide notice to the Authority of all site plans wholly or partially within ~~or adjacent to~~ the Conservation ~~Area~~Plan as well as those within ~~350~~150 feet of the adopted Conservation Area boundaries. Said notice shall be provided within ~~one week after receipt of such plans by the Planning Department~~two weeks of acceptance of such requests by the City and for any subsequent amendments to the initial proposal. The Authority, with the Civic Association Committee, shall have the right to review and comment to the City Planning Commission concerning the developer's plans and working drawings, particularly as they are concerned with, but not limited to, site planning, architectural layout, materials to be used in construction, landscaping, access, advertising and identification signs, and street and sidewalk improvements.

The Authority shall have fifteen (15) days following the receipt of said notice to complete such review and submit appropriate comments. All such comments shall be incorporated in the related reports submitted to the City Council.

COUNTY: Development and Site Plans - The Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) shall provide notice to the Authority of all development proposals and site plans that are wholly or partially within ~~or adjacent to the Conservation Area~~ as well as those within 350 feet of the adopted Conservation Area boundaries. Said notice shall be provided within one week after receipt of such plans by DPWES. The Authority, with the Civic Association Committee, shall have the right to review and comment to DPWES on the developer's plans and working drawings particularly as they are concerned with, but not limited to, site planning, architectural layout, materials to be used in construction, landscaping, access, advertising and identification signs, and street and sidewalk improvements.

In conjunction with this review, upon request by the Authority, all proposed subdivision plans and all proposed development and site plans for projects that are within the aforementioned review area shall be submitted to the Authority and the Committee for review and comment. The Authority shall have thirty (30) days following the receipt of said notice to complete such review and submit appropriate comments. All such comments shall be incorporated in the related reports submitted to ~~the Board of Supervisors~~Subdivision Site Review or Land Development Services.

4. CITY AND COUNTY: Public Improvements - The City or the County shall direct that any or all of its respective public agencies which propose projects within Conservation Area boundaries shall provide to the Authority notice of such projects and shall then, upon request of the Authority, provide plans and specifications for the purpose of community review and comment. Said notice shall be provided a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the advertisement for bids for the construction of such projects.

Duration of Controls, Regulations, and Standards

Rehabilitation and new construction within the project area will be subject to the controls, regulations, and standards set out in the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Neighborhood Improvement and Conservation Plan adopted on December 8, 1980, and to any more restrictive provisions which may be contained in this updated Plan. ~~Any~~Once the Revised and Updated Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Neighborhood Improvement and Conservation Plan is approved and adopted by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the City of Falls Church City Council, all controls imposed in the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Neighborhood Improvement and Conservation Plan will remain in effect without a termination date until ~~it is revised and adopted~~the James Lee Community has had a reasonable opportunity to review and comment and until any proposed changes are adopted in accordance with the procedures of this plan for a plan amendment by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the City of Falls Church City Council. This plan is to be reviewed for updates by the community every five years from the date of adoption by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the City of Falls Church City Council.

Procedure for Conservation Plan Amendment

- ~~A.~~ All proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Authority for the purpose of holding a public hearing to provide the opportunity for residents in the Conservation Area and all other affected parties to voice their views on the proposal. ~~The~~At least 30 days prior to any public hearing, the Authority shall call a meeting of the Civic Association Committee, the James Lee Civic Association, as well as the adjacent property owners, for the purpose of review and comment of the proposed amendment. Following the public hearing, the Authority shall then submit the amendment and its recommendations to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the Falls Church City Council for final action. Any amendment to the Conservation Plan shall require notice, as may be necessary pursuant to Section 36-49.1(B) of the Code of Virginia, a public hearing, and final action approving such amendment by both the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the Falls Church City Council.
- ~~B. Any zoning plan, master plan, or Comprehensive Plan amendment that requires an amendment to the Conservation Plan shall upon receiving the recommendations of the Authority after public hearing require only the final action of the governing body in which jurisdiction the subject property is located.~~
- ~~C. All proposed amendments to the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Neighborhood Improvement and Conservation Plan and any zoning plan, master plan, or Comprehensive Plan amendment shall be brought to the attention of the James Lee Civic Association as well as the adjacent property owners affected by the action.~~

**THE FALLS CHURCH/
JAMES LEE/SOUTHGATE
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
AND CONSERVATION PLAN**



December 8, 1980

**Department of Housing
& Community Development**

FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA

7:30 James Lee
Neighborhood Improvement
Program & Conservation
Plan

MEMORANDUM

TO: Walter D. Webdale, Director
Housing & Community Development DATE December 8, 1980

FROM: Verdia L. Haywood
Executive Assistant *Verdia L. Haywood*

FILE NO:

SUBJECT: PH on Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Neighborhood
Improvement Program & Conservation Plan (Providence District)

REFERENCE:

On December 8, 1980, the Board of Supervisors adopted resolution approving Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Neighborhood Improvement and Conservation Plan with the following amendments to the Neighborhood Improvement and Conservation Plan:

Page 11, 1st paragraph: The following sentence will be added at the end of the paragraph: "All land use within that portion of the Conservation Area which is located within Fairfax County shall be guided by the recommendations of the County Comprehensive Plan."

Page 11, 2nd paragraph, 1st sentence: Delete "however."

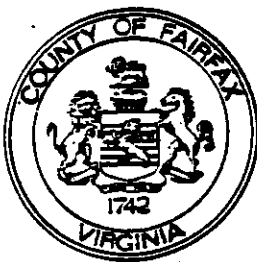
Pages 31 & 32, County: Comprehensive Planning Actions: The following paragraph will be added at the end of this section: "All proposed changes in land use, within that portion of the Conservation Area which is located within the County, shall be submitted to the Office of Comprehensive Planning in accordance with existing County procedures including the Annual Comprehensive Plan Review."

VLH/prw
Attachment

cc: Director, OCP (w/attachment)

D R A F T

THE FALLS CHURCH/JAMES LEE/SOUTHGATE
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
AND CONSERVATION PLAN



October 1, 1980

Department of Housing
& Community Development

Dec. 8, 1980

7:00 PM

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

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BACKGROUND

Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate, known also as simply the James Lee Community, is a residential community located on either side of Annandale Road between Route 50 and Route 29/211. Vacant land characterizes the western boundary of the neighborhood. A small portion of the area is located within the corporate boundaries of the City of Falls Church. Fairfax County and the City have an existing cooperation agreement on housing and community development projects within Falls Church. The community is bounded on the north by Hillwood Avenue and South Washington Street; on the east by the Hillwood Square Apartments and the Whittier Intermediate School athletic field; on the west by the Tripps Run Stream Valley; on the southeast by Clearview Drive and on the southwest by James Lee Street.

The community is characterized by irregular size lots and housing ranging in age from the pre-1900's to post 1970. In terms of property ownership and value, the neighborhood is relatively stable. Real estate sales on single-family detached homes and vacant property have remained relatively constant indicating a low rate of turnover for existing housing and vacant land in the neighborhood. The 1974 conversion of the James Lee Apartments to condominium ownership resulted in a one time increase in real estate activity within the community. Unlike Fairfax County and Falls Church City as a whole, housing values in James Lee have not kept abreast of inflation.

The Neighborhood Improvement Program provides a comprehensive approach to preserving and improving the James Lee Community as a viable residential neighborhood. The program includes recommendations for funding public projects such as road improvements, improvements to the James Lee Community Center, and storm drainage improvements, as well as recommendations for joint public and private participation in the Home Improvement Loan and Grant Program. The Conservation Plan and Neighbor-

hood Improvement Program will promote confidence in the future of James Lee by:

- o removing uncertainty about land use plans for the area;
- o providing public improvements which make the neighborhood more attractive and which reinforce a sense of community; and
- o making available low-cost financing which provides an incentive to homeowners to improve their property.

The ultimate success of the Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan will depend largely on the extent of public and private confidence in the community and on the extent of citizen support for the program.

Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of the Federal Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 is the preservation and development of viable communities by providing funds to localities to meet a series of objectives, which include;

- (1) The elimination and prevention of blighting influences, deteriorating property, and declining neighborhoods;
- (2) the elimination of conditions detrimental to health, safety and public welfare;
- (3) the provision of decent housing and a suitable living environment;
- (4) the expansion of economic opportunities;
- (5) the expansion and improvement of the quantity and quality of community services and public facilities; and
- (6) a more rational utilization of land and natural resources.

Funds allocated under the Community Development Block Grant Program can be spent for a variety of activities including the acquisition of property for rehabilitation or for public use, the construction of public facilities and utility systems, the rehabilitation of individual homes, the provision of public services,

and the planning and administration costs associated with these activities.

Under this framework of eligible activities and general objectives set by the Federal Government, a more definitive set of goals and objectives has been developed for the James Lee community. This program proposes that the basic goal of the Neighborhood Improvement Program should be the preservation of a viable residential community. The intent of community improvement can be defined by five goals:

1. Develop a Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan.
2. Improve the quality of life of the existing residents through the implementation of a comprehensive public improvements strategy.
3. Strengthen the residential base of the community by improving the quality of the housing stock.
4. Provide residents the opportunity to obtain suitable housing within their income means.
5. Encourage an ongoing process of citizen participation to insure active community involvement in the planning process.

Efforts to achieve these five comprehensive goals for the community can be made more specific by identifying a number of objectives which the Neighborhood Improvement Program should be designed to meet. These objectives are grouped below in six categories:

General:

- o Ensure that plans for each project within the community support the overall program goals.
- o Establish a set of development and design standards to encourage high standards of quality in the provision of future improvements.

Land Use:

- o Conserve the James Lee neighborhood and provide for new residential development at densities compatible with the community.

- o Promote housing types and development patterns which can hold down the cost of housing and preserve a maximum amount of open space.
- o Avoid possible adverse effects of improper or excessive commercial development.
- o Stimulate the private rehabilitation of existing dwellings and ensure that the improvements are enduring and of high quality.

Environment:

- o Improve the storm water drainage system to provide for the efficient removal of surface water and to correct flooding, erosion, and ponding problems especially on Liberty, Douglas, and Brice Streets.
- o Discourage trash dumping on vacant land and provide for the removal and clean-up of any areas with litter and trash.

Social:

- o Provide housing opportunities for a broad range of income and age groups.
- o Promote the expansion of private and public social programs for the residents of the area.
- o Minimize the impact of the tax burden on residents of low or fixed incomes by encouraging all eligible citizens to utilize the tax relief programs available in both jurisdictions.
- o Encourage local citizen leadership and participation in the upgrading of the area and in the decision-making process of the Neighborhood Improvement Program.
- o Ensure that all citizens in the area are compensated within the requirements of Federal and State law for any public actions concerning their property or households.
- o Encourage existing residents of the area to remain.
- o Promote programs to ensure the protection and safety of the residents and their properties.

Neighborhood Facilities:

- o Improve existing community facilities where appropriate and provide for new facilities as necessary.
- o Improve existing recreational facilities.
- o Develop a program to provide for the improvement of streets, sidewalks, and other public facilities in areas of need as identified by residents and the appropriate government agency.
- o Encourage the use of existing community service programs, and provide for the improvement of programs where deficient.

Traffic and Circulation:

- o Plan and establish a system of traffic movement through the area which minimizes unrelated through traffic, while providing adequate access to and circulation within the community.
- o Work with the Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation to improve the conditions and safety of the road system.
- o Establish a system of pedestrian movement in the community which will provide safe and easy access to the community center, parks, and other facilities in the neighborhood.
- o Develop a program to provide for sidewalk and trails construction.

Recommendations

The Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan were approved by the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (hereinafter referred to as the Authority) on October 21, 1980, and adopted by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on December 8, 1980, and the Falls Church Council on November 10, 1980. The Authority and the City of Falls Church (hereinafter referred to as the City) entered into a cooperation agreement dated June 7, 1976, as amended on November 18, 1977, and further amended in 1979 to implement such programs as these.

1. The adoption of annual funding for programs to improve existing conditions in James Lee. Portions of the Program have been funded for FY 80 from the County's federal Community Development entitlement known as the Community Development Block Grant Program. It is recommended that funds from all available sources be appropriated at the beginning of subsequent program years. Falls Church has targeted the area for a portion of the funds from the City's Community Development Block Grant, Small Cities program. These funds are for Home Improvement Grants.
2. Participation in the Home Improvement Loan and Grant Program of both single-family detached homes and condominiums. A concerted effort should be made to gain the full participation of elderly homeowners, single head of households, and landlords.
3. Increased public expenditures for improvements to provide a concrete measure of government's support for the community. The ultimate success of the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan will depend primarily upon the extent of public expenditures for public improvements and private participation in the community. Increased investment by the neighborhood's residents (in terms of time and money), is needed as a strong indication of the stability and strength of the community. Increased investment by private enterprise is also needed as an expression of confidence in the future of the community. The Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan will encourage this investment by:
 - o clarifying and strengthening land use plans for the area, through the adoption of the Conservation Plan;

- o providing public improvements which add to the attractiveness of the community and which reinforce a sense of community;
- o making low-cost financing, and other assistance which provides incentives, available to homeowners to improve their property.

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

A major component of the overall Neighborhood Improvement Program is the program of public facilities construction. The Public Improvement Program was developed with participation by members of the James Lee Neighborhood Improvement Task Force, who helped identify and provide solutions for community problems. Following is a description of proposed improvement projects:

Proposed Projects

This description of projects is an initial set of projects proposed for the Public Improvement Program. These and other projects will be undertaken in stages throughout the life of the program.

As more information is made available on community needs and as additional funding opportunities become available, the Improvement Program may be revised as necessary.

Block grant money will be used for many of the projects listed here. The extent of the need for other public and private sources of funding cannot yet be estimated, though additional funds will be required.

A. Circulation Plan and Improvements

A circulation Plan for both pedestrian and vehicular mobility within James Lee is now being developed. Initially, a study will be conducted to identify internal circulation problems and to make recommendations. Major consideration will be given to vehicular, pedestrian and recreational (hike and bikeway) circulation, with emphasis on promoting community cohesiveness through linking community facilities to existing

and planned residential developments in the neighborhood.

Estimated Cost:

Development of Circulation Plan	\$ 40,000
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Based upon the recommendations of the Circulation Plan, the following improvements will be:

1. Traffic Safety Improvements

The Circulation Plan will include studies of street intersections which present existing or potential circulation conflicts, particularly those with high traffic volumes and narrow rights of way and those with visual blind spots. Two such intersections have already been identified by citizens as problem areas. These are the intersections of Annandale Road and Costner Drive, and Sampson Street and Annandale Road. Hazardous road conditions have also been identified in front of #2761 and #2767 Annandale Road. Residents have reported damage caused by automobiles failing to negotiate the sharp curve in the road alignment.

The primary purpose of this analysis is to determine the feasibility of installing traffic signals, improving sight distance, or providing other solutions in identified problem areas. All improvements provided will be coordinated with Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation and will conform to their Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

Street crossings should also be provided at points where there is a heavy pedestrian flow. In particular, the intersection of Annandale Road and School Lane needs a crosswalk to provide for pedestrians, especially children, going to the community center.

2. Local Road Improvements

The Circulation Plan will also make recommendations for the realignment and linkage of certain streets to promote improved movement within the community.

Six of the roads in James Lee are unimproved private roads. They are Tanners Hill Road, Scipio Lane, Costner Drive, Sampson Street, Random Road, and Clearview Drive. These roads are not of adequate width to be accepted by the State System even if their roadbeds were upgraded without disturbing the properties of existing owners.

In accordance with the Fairfax County Road Maintenance and Improvement Program private roads within the County will be maintained by the Fairfax County Department of Public Works if the residents agree to dedicate the right-of-way to the County. In Falls Church, road improvements must also be in dedicated areas of adequate width if the road is to be maintained by the City. Under the Neighborhood Improvement Program the Authority could expend block grant funds to improve these roads in both the County and the City. In cases where private roads were of adequate width, they could be acquired by the Authority or the County or the City, improved with block grant funds and/or County and City revenues and put into the state or City road system for future maintenance. Due to the expensive nature of road construction, however, any improvements of this type will have to be done on a very selective basis. The decision to expend funds to upgrade a road will have to be based on certain criteria, such as the number of dwelling units fronting on the road and the cooperation of affected property owners.

3. Sidewalk Construction

Sidewalks are currently located only along James Lee Street, School Lane

and portions of Annandale Road. This situation results in inadequate pedestrian access to the community center, the park, and other facilities. The Circulation Plan will define a system of recommended sidewalks and pathways to link existing and planned residential developments in the James Lee community to these facilities. Upon completion of this plan, a sidewalk construction program can be initiated to implement these recommendations, provided funding is available.

B. Storm Drainage Improvements

Curbs, gutters, and storm sewer inlets do not exist in the James Lee community except along James Lee Street, Annandale Road and School Lane. Even in these areas, existing storm drainage is inadequate and has been noted as a serious problem by many residents. Fairfax County has budgeted capital improvement funds for storm drainage improvements within the proposed Conservation Area. The City of Falls Church has included storm drainage in this area only as these improvements are included in Capital Budget items for street repair. As part of the Neighborhood Improvement Program, a storm drainage study is recommended to define solutions to the storm drainage problems. Upon completion of this study, a construction program can be initiated in the event funding is available, to install curbs, gutters, and sidewalks.

C. Community Center

The architect's design for the commercial kitchen at the James Lee Community Center has already been accepted. The kitchen addition will be used to provide food service for ongoing day care and senior citizen programs as well as complementing existing recreational and instructional programs. Funds from Program Year V have been allocated for this project.

Estimated Cost	\$ 72,000
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LAND USE AND HOUSING

Land Use

The basic concept of the Neighborhood Improvement Program is to preserve James Lee as a residential community, to prevent the area from deteriorating physically, and to provide for its improvement in the future. In order to accomplish the objectives, it is recommended that existing land uses be preserved, and that future housing development in the community be at the same general density as the existing neighborhood. For this reason, the Conservation Plan is based on the densities and uses defined in the County Comprehensive Plan and its amendments, other County ordinances and codes, and the Falls Church Master Plan.

In certain areas, however, it is recommended that infill development of vacant land should be at a relatively higher residential use. This would encourage new construction at a level which would allow provision of low and moderate income housing at costs within the financial means of the existing residents. This recommendation is in conformance with the Neighborhood Improvement Program objectives of encouraging increased housing opportunities for a broad range of income and age groups; providing for new residential development at densities compatible with the community, yet which adequately reflect existing land values and locational advantages; and promoting housing types and development patterns which can hold down the cost of housing and yet preserve an adequate amount of open space. It is also recommended that any new commercial or office uses be confined to the business district along Annandale Road, Washington Street, and Hillwood Avenue. All institutional uses, i.e. schools, parks, churches, etc., shall remain as currently designated.

These recommendations are in response to the expressed desires of the community and in response to the Neighborhood Improvement Program objective of preserving the area as a sound and viable residential community. Furthermore, they are consistent with the Area I Comprehensive Plan recommendation that James Lee remain a predomi-

nantly residential community. The recommendations are also consistent with the Falls Church Master Plan which establishes a general policy to maintain the City's basic residential character.

Housing

Home Improvement Loan and Grant Program

Housing rehabilitation is an essential part of maintaining older neighborhoods as desirable residential communities. As a central part of the Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan, the County, the Authority, and the City will work to upgrade and to stabilize the existing residential neighborhood through the provision of home improvement loans and grants. This program is designed to provide for extensive improvements by:

- o offering the loans at below market rates which will be within reach of persons of modest income, or at rates which will provide an incentive to participate;
- o enlisting the participation of private lending institutions in order to increase the amount of available capital. More than half of the respondents to the James Lee questionnaire were interested in home improvement loans and/or grants. Home maintenance and repair were frequently identified as significant problems; and
- o using Community Development Block Grant funds to provide grants for part of the rehabilitation costs, used in conjunction with low interest loans, these grants can maximize the ability of residents to participate in the rehabilitation program.

Housing Production

The Authority, under the powers of the Conservation Plan, will assist in the provision of new moderate-priced housing to increase and improve the housing stock available for persons of modest income. The objective is to encourage developers of vacant land within the community to include moderate-priced

housing units of various sizes and types of units, as a part of their respective development plans. The Authority can assist private enterprise in the provision of moderate-priced housing by:

- o assisting developers in applying for density credits;
- o implementing Federal and State financing programs for both new construction and rehabilitation;
- o working directly with area lending institutions; and
- o subsidizing land and infrastructure costs to reduce housing costs.

The infusion of new residential housing in the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate neighborhood will further serve to attain the goal of developing a viable community as well as ensuring the permanence of the community.

Historic Preservation

Community residents have expressed an interest in the preservation of the historical features of the area, specifically the preservation of the cemeteries located behind Galloway Methodist Church and Second Baptist Church. It is recommended that such preservation activities be pursued under the Neighborhood Improvement Program in order to preserve and enhance the historical character of James Lee.

First Year Neighborhood Improvement Program

As a result of meetings with County residents, the following projects have been funded for implementation in the first year of the James Lee Neighborhood Improvement Program. The program year corresponds with Fairfax County's Fiscal Year 1980.

Circulation Plan	\$ 40,000
Community Center (Commercial Kitchen and Storage Facility)	\$ 72,000

Implementation

The primary responsibility for the implementation of the program will rest

with the citizens of James Lee. It is essential that residents undertake the upgrading of their own neighborhood concurrent with the public improvement projects. The activities of the County, the Authority, and the City will be designed to be supportive of individual actions, and to provide an impetus for continuing citizen involvement in the program. These public activities will be limited to the following:

1. The installation, construction, or reconstruction of streets, utilities, parks, parking facilities, playgrounds, public buildings, and other public facilities essential to the Neighborhood Improvement Program.
2. The provision of assistance to property owners or occupants within the Conservation Area to improve their property by providing loans and grants directed toward the prevention and elimination of blight.
3. The acquisition of property for the purpose of rehabilitating housing or providing a public use such as a park or sidewalks. Acquisition is limited by Section V of the Conservation Plan for the County only. Transactions between an owner and the Authority shall be on the basis of voluntary agreement. The use of eminent domain powers by the Authority will be limited to acquiring properties located in the Fairfax County portion of the Conservation Area for the uses as permitted under Title 36 of the Code of Virginia. The Authority may buy and rehabilitate property offered to it by private owners, and then sell the property on the open market to persons who will reside in the structure for a least one (1) year. New development will, of course, be allowed to occur through normal actions of the private sector, but all development will take place within the framework of the Conservation Plan and established zoning so that new development will be compatible with and beneficial to the entire community. All property owners or occupants will receive the full benefits where applicable of the Federal Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970, as amended, and state law including fair market value of all property acquired as established by independent appraisal.

4. The disposition of land or improvements to further the objectives of the Neighborhood Improvement Program. Cooperation between the County and the City of Falls Church and the Authority will expand the funding options available to implement the Neighborhood Improvement Program. This will make it possible to increase the sources of funding for public improvements and extend credit to private property owners. One or more of the following sources of funding will be used to implement the projects described above.
- o Federal and State grant funds, including but not limited to Community Development Block Grant funds;
 - o Bonds and notes issued by the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority;
 - o Bonds and notes issued by the County or the City of Falls Church in accordance with applicable laws;
 - o Appropriation of County or City general revenues.

Through the provision of community facilities and home improvement loans, the area will be enhanced by the voluntary participation of its residents and the private market.

Coordination and Responsibilities of Public Agencies

The County, the City, and all their agencies, authorities, boards, and commissions will cooperate with and assist the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority in the implementation of the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan, as provided in Section III of the Conservation Plan. The County and the City of Falls Church shall carry out those activities for which each is legally enabled and which constitute its usual function. All other activities called for in the Program and Plan which cannot be carried out by the County and the City shall be the responsibility of the Authority. Overall coordination of the implementation of the Program, including coordination with the State and its agencies, shall be the responsibility of the Executive Secretary of the Authority, who is also the County Executive, where

activities are solely within the county, and shall include coordination efforts by the City where appropriate. The Executive Secretary of the Authority, who is also the County Executive, shall work under the direction of the Board of Supervisors and the Authority, through the Department of Housing and Community Development. Coordination as it involves the City shall be the responsibility of the City Manager under the direction of the City Council and through the appropriate City Department.

THE FALLS CHURCH/JAMES LEE/SOUTHGATE

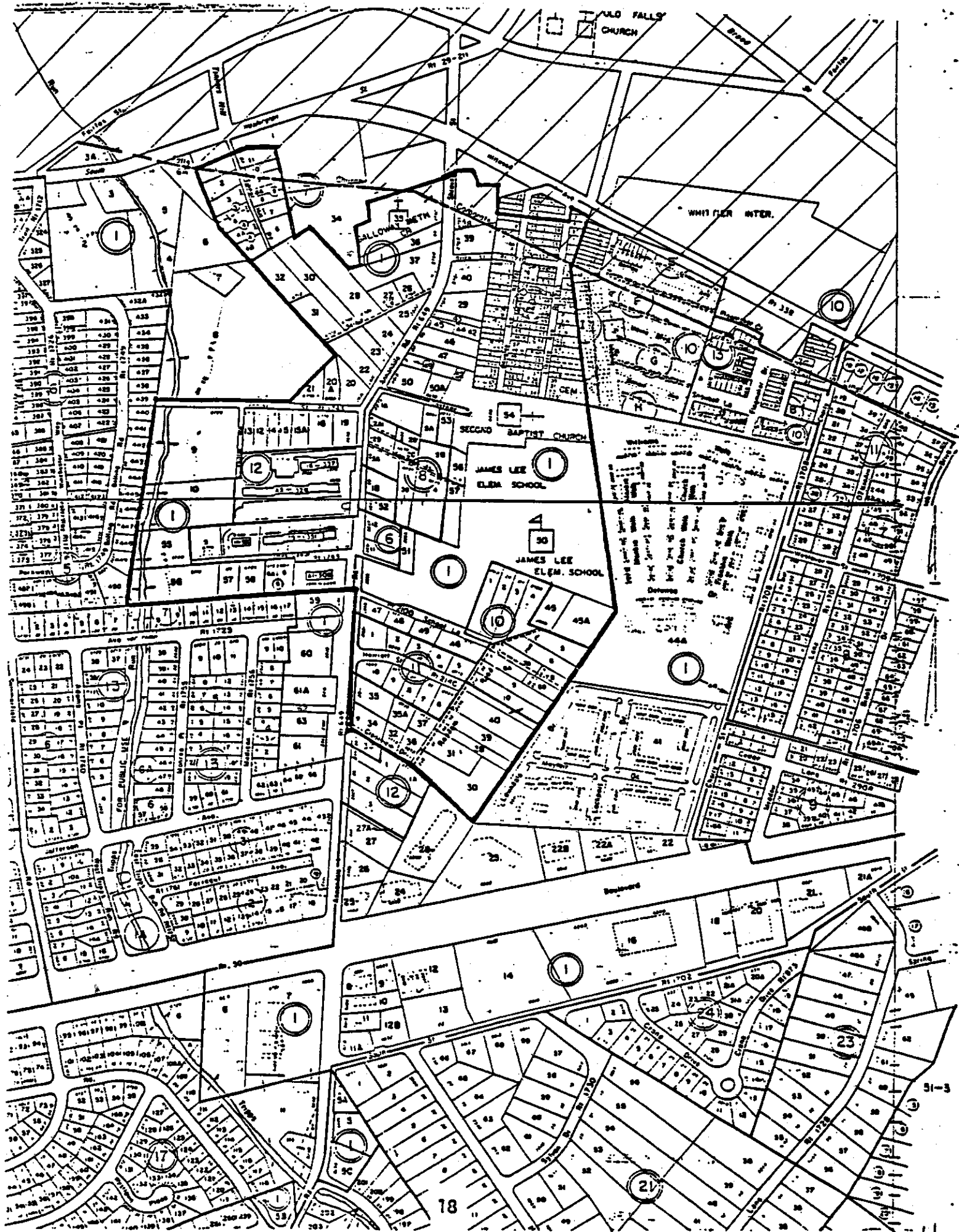
CONSERVATION PLAN

I. CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARIES

The boundaries of the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Conservation Area are illustrated on the Plan Exhibit and may be described as follows:

BEGINNING at the point of intersection of the center line of Annandale Road (Route 649) and an imaginary extension of the southern right-of-way of Clearview Drive; thence running generally eastward along the same course to the point of intersection with Random Road; thence continuing across Random Road in an eastwardly direction to the southern boundary of the property presently numbered 2951 Random Road; thence continuing in a generally eastward direction along said southern boundary line to the eastern property line of 2951 Random Road; thence generally northward along said property line to the eastern boundary of properties presently numbered 2943, 2939, 2935, 2927, 2923, 2905, and 2901 Random Road, and 6614 and 6617 School Lane; thence generally northward along said boundaries to the eastern boundaries of property identified as lots 45A and 50 on Fairfax County Tax Map 50-4((1)), and lot 54 on Tax Map 50-2((1)); thence in a generally northward direction along said boundaries to the eastern boundaries of the properties presently identified as lots 13 thru 33, on Fairfax County Tax Map 50-2((9)), and Parcels 7 thru 12 on the City of Falls Church map Section 20((2)); thence continuing along said boundaries to the southern right-of-way of Hillwood Avenue (Route 338).

THENCE, along the southern right-of-way of Hillwood Avenue generally westward to its intersection of the eastern right-of-way of Liberty Avenue, thence generally southward along said line to a point opposite the northern boundary of parcel 59 on City of Falls Church map Section 20((2)); thence generally westward across Liberty Avenue and along said boundary of lots 59, 69, and 119 of the Southgate Subdivision in the City of Falls Church; thence continuing in the City of Falls Church generally northward



along the eastern boundary of lots 2 and 4 to the northern boundary of lot 2; thence continuing in a generally northwestward direction approximately 100 feet to the eastern boundary of lot 21C; thence generally northward to the northern boundary of lot 21C; thence generally westward along said boundary to the eastern right-of-way of Annandale Road (Route 649).

THENCE, across Annandale Road on a diagonal line to the easternmost point on the northern boundary line of lot 35 on Tax Map 50-2((1)), known as the Galloway Methodist Church; thence in a generally westward direction, thence southward, thence westward, thence southward again following the boundary of said property to the northwest corner of the property presently numbered 2754 Annandale Road; thence generally southward along the western boundary of said property to the northern boundary of the property presently numbered 2760 Annandale Road; thence westward to the intersection of said boundary with the eastern boundary of property presently numbered 6704 Scipio Lane, also identified as Lot 28 on Fairfax County Tax Map 50-2((1)); thence continuing generally northward along said boundary to the northern boundary of said property; thence continuing in a generally westward direction along said boundary line to its intersection with the eastern boundary of property identified as Lot 6, Tax Map 50-2((7)); in a generally northward direction along the eastern boundary of parcels 6, 7, 8, 8A, 9, 10, and 11 on Fairfax County Tax Map 50-2-((7)); thence continuing generally westward along the northern boundary of said lot 11 to and across Tinnors Hill Road to the northern boundary of lot 1, Tax Map 50-2((7)); thence along said boundary to the western boundary of said property; thence generally southward along said boundary of lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 4A, and 4B to the western boundary of Lot 32, Tax Map 50-2((1)); thence continuing in the same general direction along the western boundary of lots 32, 31, and 22 to the northern boundary of lot 20A, Tax Map 50-2((1)), and continuing generally southward along said boundary; and along the northern boundary of lot 21 to a point on the centerline

at Poplar Street; thence continuing in a westward direction along the center line of Poplar Street to its termination; thence in a southern direction along the western boundary of lots 9, 10, 55, and 56; thence in an eastern direction along the southern boundaries of lots 56, 57, 58, 6A, 6, and A1-306 to the center line of Annandale Road (Route 649); thence in a southern direction along Annandale Road to the point of beginning.

II. EXISTING CONDITIONS

On October 1, 1979, the Board of Supervisors directed the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (hereinafter referred to as the Authority) to prepare a Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan for the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Community, also known as the James Lee Community. This directive was based on identified conditions which substantiate the fact that James Lee is physically deteriorating and in need of conservation through appropriate public action. These conditions, which are in accordance with the standards set forth in Section 36-49.1 of Title 36 of the Code of Virginia, as amended, are briefly outlined on the following pages and documented in the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Community Summary of Existing Conditions which was submitted to the Board of Supervisors on October 1, 1979.

A. Housing in Need of Repair

Without entering the homes that were surveyed, a windshield survey of structural conditions was conducted in April, 1979. Although the survey may not reflect the full extent of deteriorated housing since serious structural defects are not always visible from the street, it does provide a general indication of housing quality in the neighborhood. Four categories

were used in rating the structural condition of dwelling units in the James Lee community:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Percent in Category</u>
#1 - Sound Structures	48.6%
#2 - Structures Needing Minor Repairs	19.3%
#3 - Structures Needing Major Rehabilitation	22.0%
#4 - Structures Needing Extensive Rehabilitation	10.1%

51.4 percent (56 homes) of the 109 single-family houses in James Lee are in need of some repair, falling in the #2, #3, and #4 categories above. Of the 109 single-family units in the community, 21 (19.3%) are in category #2 and need such repairs as weatherproofing around windows and doors or new downspouts. There were 24 homes (22%) in category #3. These units need major rehabilitative work such as partially replacing the roofs, installing new siding, or repairing porches and steps. Another 11 units (10.1%) were rated as needing extensive rehabilitation (category #4). Most of these units required substantial repairs to major structural elements of the house, such as foundations, roofs, or load-bearing walls, and extensive repair to porches and steps. There are six vacant and boarded properties in the community which along with much of the vacant land, have become impacted by the excessive dumping of litter.

The James Lee Condominiums were not included in the above-mentioned statistics on housing in the community. There are approximately 177 units in this complex. Due to the relatively recent conversion, it appears from a routine windshield survey that the condominiums are in good repair and represent a well-maintained housing source within the community.

B. Lower Income Levels and Lower Property Values

According to the 1970 Census, the median family income of the James Lee area was approximately \$12,590. However, the median family income for Fairfax County as a whole was \$15,707 and \$16,383 for Falls Church. It is because of lower income levels that many residents of James Lee are without the economic means to maintain or rehabilitate their homes through the use of conventional financing. In addition, there are a number of elderly, retired homeowners living on fixed incomes, and some renters who are financially unable to purchase homes.

Unlike Fairfax County or Falls Church as a whole, housing values in James Lee have not kept abreast with inflation. This situation is reflected in the assessments of single-family detached housing. As of January 1, 1979, the average assessed value of single-family detached housing in James Lee was approximately \$26,116. However, the Countywide average assessed value of single-family detached housing for the same date was \$75,355 and \$85,200 for Falls Church.

The James Lee Apartment complex was converted to condominium ownership around the end of 1973. The period between 1974 and 1978 exhibits the dominance of condominium sales over real estate activity in the community. However, the condominium sales appreciation rate has remained low. The average sales prices for the James Lee Condominiums are lower compared to the average sales prices for garden apartment condominiums in Fairfax County.

C. Inadequate Public Facilities

1. Streets - Most of the streets in James Lee are of substandard width, and many are in need of repair. Vehicular circulation is poor due to the inadequate roads. In addition, the internal road system consists

of many dead-end and unimproved private streets, which impede traffic movement within the community.

2. Sidewalks - Sidewalks are available only along portions of School Lane, James Lee Street and Annandale Road. As a result, pedestrian access to the community center, the park and other facilities is inadequate from most of the community.
3. Storm Drainage - Curbs, gutters and storm sewer inlets are generally not available in James Lee. As a result, standing water in streets and in yards is common after every rain, and many residents have cited storm drainage as one of the most critical problems in the community. These conditions of deteriorated and deteriorating private and public facilities which are a detriment to the health, safety, and welfare of the community, warrant a comprehensive improvement program that directs both public and private resources toward alleviating these problems.

III. UNDERTAKINGS OF A CONSERVATION PLAN

A. General Requirements

This Conservation Plan shall be implemented by the Authority after it is approved and adopted by the Board of Supervisors and the Falls Church City Council. The Authority, the Board of Supervisors, and the City Council shall each conduct public hearings prior to approval of the Conservation Plan. All undertakings and actions under the power of eminent domain authorized in this Conservation Plan shall be deemed to be public uses as stipulated in Title 36 of the Code of Virginia, as amended. This Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Virginia.

B. Authorized Undertakings

Within the Conservation Area, the powers of the Authority to carry out the work or undertaking as called for in the Conservation Plan include the following:

1. Acquisition of property within the Conservation Area designated for public use subject to Section V of the Conservation Plan;
2. Acquisition of other property through private purchase and the rehabilitation of property so acquired;
3. Provision for the installation, construction, or reconstruction of streets, utilities, parks, parking facilities, playgrounds, public buildings; other site improvements, and the improvement of private roads essential to the conservation or rehabilitation planned;
4. Disposition of acquired land or improvements through sale, lease, or other conveyance;
5. Assistance to property owners or occupants within the Conservation Area in the improvement of their respective holdings, directed toward the prevention and elimination of blight;
6. Assistance to private individuals in the purchase of moderate-cost housing.

C. Cooperation Between the City of Falls Church, Fairfax County and Other Agencies and Authorities

Fairfax County, the City of Falls Church and other local agencies and authorities shall aid and cooperate with the Authority under the powers of the Code of Virginia for the purpose of assisting the development and administration of the Conservation Plan. The City has an existing

cooperation agreement with the Authority which has been amended to reflect cooperation in the area of implementation of this Plan. The City will designate the appropriate department to carry out the work in the areas of street improvements and housing rehabilitation for the City.

IV. RELATIONSHIP TO LOCAL OBJECTIVES

The Conservation Plan is consistent with the goals and objectives set forth in the adopted Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan and the City of Falls Church Master Plan. Both of these plans recommend improvement and maintenance of housing and neighborhood quality. Specific objectives of both the Countywide and City plans relating to the attainment of this goal are:

- o to initiate Community Development Programs in communities that indicate the need;
- o to conserve and assure maintenance of existing moderate-income neighborhoods;
- o to prevent older declining structures and neighborhoods from becoming substandard;
- o to improve physical community services in existing neighborhoods; and
- o to ensure that economic pressure on these neighborhoods, which may be brought about by the presence of major development activity, does not result in their deterioration as desirable residential communities.

V. PROPERTY ACQUISITION

Although substantial acquisition of property is not anticipated, the Authority is empowered to acquire properties within the Conservation Area by purchase or, eminent domain pursuant to law for properties located in that portion of the Conservation Area in Fairfax County. All acquisitions under the Conservation Plan shall be carried out consistent with the applicable provisions of the Federal Uniform Relocation and Real

Property Acquisition Act of 1970, as amended; and the Virginia Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1973, as amended; and as set forth in Title 36 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended.

A. Acquisition

The Authority is empowered to acquire, through the use of the eminent domain if necessary, certain properties within that portion of the Conservation Area located in the County, as set forth in Title 36 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended. Included are those areas which may be designated for public use. Other properties in the Conservation Area may be acquired by the Authority for rehabilitation or public use when the owner offers such property for sale to the Authority for fair market value. All reasonable means of acquiring property through negotiated sale will be used prior to the exercise of eminent domain.

In addition, the Authority will approach owners of vacant housing, which exert a blighting influence on adjacent property, to attempt to acquire these properties if the owners are unwilling or unable to improve them.

B. Disposition of Acquired Properties

The Authority may dispose of land and improvements which it has acquired through sale, lease, or other conveyance. In order to insure the improvement of the area, in accordance with the Conservation Plan, the purchasers or lessees of any Authority acquired properties shall be subject to the following conditions for a period of twenty-five (25) years from the date of adoption:

1. The property shall be used for the purpose designated in the Conservation Plan;

2. The installation or construction of any improvements of a permanent nature as specified in the Plan will commence within the time period fixed as reasonable by the Authority;
3. The sale, lease, or occupancy of all such properties will be executed without restrictions on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, or marital status.

VI. RELOCATION POLICY

It is not anticipated that there will be any displacement of persons located within the Conservation Area boundaries. In the event that there is a need to acquire occupied properties, the Authority will institute and administer a relocation program which will provide the benefits and protections as may be required by the Federal Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970, as amended, and the Virginia Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1973, as amended. Persons will not be required to vacate these properties located within the Conservation Area until such time that decent, safe, and sanitary accommodation on suitable sites will be made available at rents or prices that are within their financial means. The Authority will advise all affected persons of those benefits to which they are entitled and will maintain close contact with them throughout the life of the Conservation Plan. There will be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, or marital status in the relocation program, as is required by law. Every effort will be made to find relocation sites within the project area for any displacees.

VII. PROCEDURES FOR REHABILITATION

A Fairfax County and City of Falls Church Home Improvement Loan and Grant Program will be instituted and administered by the Authority to

assist property owners within the Conservation Area in upgrading their properties. The program will be financed by both public and private funds.

Every property owner in the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Conservation Area will be eligible to receive a home improvement loan at sliding scale interest rates based on their gross annual income. In addition, property owners with low annual incomes may be further eligible for grants.

Property owners will be notified of their eligibility to receive a loan or grant by the Authority. Funds will be made available at various rates to all property owners with acceptable credit histories, depending upon income and ability to make payments.

The Authority may acquire properties through private purchase which are offered to it by the owners. Upon acquisition of such property, the Authority may, at its option:

- (1) rehabilitate each structure according to accepted standards and then sell or lease it; or
- (2) dispose of such property under conditions obligating the purchaser to rehabilitate the property within a period of eighteen (18) months after transfer of title.

In order to insure that the rehabilitation which is undertaken by private individuals is completed and that the property will be used in a manner which is consistent with the objectives of this Plan, the disposition documents shall contain the appropriate restrictions running with the land. Such restrictions shall be imposed as covenants running with the land for a period of twenty-five (25) years from the date of disposition.

After rehabilitation, properties must be in compliance with Conservation Plan standards, HUD Property Rehabilitation Standards, and housing hygiene and building codes applicable in the City of Falls Church and Fairfax County unless waived as provided for the Section VIII, B, 2, b, of this plan. The waivers shall apply only to recipients of home improvement loans and grants, and shall be used only in limited cases to allow for the economic rehabilitation of existing dwelling units without requiring unnecessary or excessive alterations or repairs.

Also the City of Falls Church will sponsor a separate Home Improvement Loan and Grant Program to assist City residents in the rehabilitation of their properties. This program is available only to residents in the Conservation Area living within the City.

A property owner in Falls Church will be eligible to receive a low-interest loan and up to thirty percent (30%) of the cost of rehabilitation as a grant, depending on income. In addition, homeowners unable to qualify for a loan because of limited income may be eligible for a grant to cover the cost of rehabilitation.

VIII. REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS FOR THE CITY OF FALLS CHURCH & FAIRFAX COUNTY

The following controls and regulations relating to land use and building requirements provide guidelines and review procedures which are intended to maximize efforts to preserve the residential character of the Conservation Area. Ingenuity and freedom of design are encouraged for all improvements and new developments as long as they remain consistent with the objectives of the Neighborhood Improvement Program. Unless otherwise stated below, all capital improvement projects will be constructed or improved in accordance with the Conservation Plan, Neighborhood Improvement Program, and all applicable state and local ordinances and codes.

A. Development Review

Following adoption of the Conservation Plan, all of the requests, plans and proposals identified below will be forwarded by the County or City to the Authority for appropriate review and comment. Specific procedures have been documented to distinguish the various requirements of the City of Falls Church from those of Fairfax County. The Authority shall follow all regulations, limitations, and time schedules of the County and the City in reviewing and commenting on said documents. The Authority shall work with a committee designated by the Falls Church/James Lee/Southgate Civic Association in carrying out all reviews called for in this section of the Conservation Plan.

1. CITY: Zoning Actions - As part of the standard review procedure, the City shall provide notice to the Authority of all rezoning requests, special use permit requests or special exception requests for properties that are wholly or partially within the adopted Conservation Area boundaries. Said notice shall be provided at least fifteen (15) days prior to a public hearing on such requests by the City Planning Commission or Board of Zoning Appeals. Following said notice, the Authority will coordinate the review of such requests by the community's Civic Association and will submit appropriate comments to the City Planning Department at or prior to the public hearing.

All comments submitted by the Authority shall be incorporated into the related reports presented by the City staff to the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals and the City Council.

COUNTY: Zoning Actions - As part of the standard review procedure the County shall provide notice to the Authority of all rezoning requests, special use permit requests, and special exception requests

for properties that are wholly or partially within the adopted Conservation Area boundaries. Said notice shall be provided within one week of the receipt of such requests by the County. Following said notice, the Authority will coordinate the review of such requests by the community's Civic Association and will submit appropriate comments to the County within thirty (30) days. All comments submitted by the Authority shall be incorporated into the related reports presented by the County staff to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

2. CITY: Comprehensive Planning Actions - The City Planning Department shall provide notice to the Authority of all proposed Master Plan amendments affecting properties within or adjacent to or within 350 feet of the adopted Conservation Area boundaries. Said notice shall be provided no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the consideration of such amendments by the Planning Commission. Following said notice the Authority, with a Civic Association Committee, shall review and provide appropriate comment on the proposed amendments. All such comments shall be incorporated in the related reports submitted by the City staff to the Planning Commission and the City Council.

COUNTY: Comprehensive Planning Actions - The Office of Comprehensive Planning shall provide notice to the Authority of all proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments affecting properties within or adjacent to or within 350 feet of the adopted Conservation Area boundaries. Said notice shall be provided no later than thirty (30) days prior to the consideration of such amendments by the Planning Commission. Following said notice the Authority, with a Civic Association Committee, shall review and provide appropriate comment on the proposed amendments.

All such comments shall be incorporated in the related reports submitted by the County staff to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

3. CITY: Development and Site Plans - The City Planning Department shall provide notice to the Authority of all site plans within or adjacent to the Conservation Area as well as those within 350 feet of the Conservation Area boundaries. Said notice shall be provided within one week after receipt of such plans by the Planning Department. The Authority, with the Civic Association Committee, shall have the right to review and comment to the City Planning Commission concerning the developer's plans and working drawings, particularly as they are concerned with, but not limited to, site planning, architectural layout, materials to be used in construction, landscaping, access, advertising and identification signs, and street and sidewalk improvements.

The Authority shall have fifteen (15) days following the receipt of said notice to complete such review and submit appropriate comments. All such comments shall be incorporated in the related reports submitted to the City Council.

COUNTY: Development and Site Plans - The Division of Environmental Management (DEM) shall provide notice to the Authority of all development proposals and site plans within or adjacent to the Conservation Area as well as those within 350 feet of the Conservation Area boundaries. Said notice shall be provided within one week after receipt of such plans by DEM. The Authority, with the Civic Association Committee, shall have the right to review and comment to DEM the

developer's plans and working drawings particularly as they are concerned with, but not limited to, site planning, architectural layout, materials to be used in construction, landscaping, access, advertising and identification signs, and street and sidewalk improvements.

In conjunction with this review, upon request by the Authority, all proposed subdivision plans and all proposed development and site plans for projects that are within the aforementioned review area shall be submitted to the Authority and the Committee for review and comment. The Authority shall have thirty (30) days following the receipt of said notice to complete such review and submit appropriate comments. All such comments shall be incorporated in the related reports submitted to the Board of Supervisors.

4. CITY AND COUNTY: Public Improvements - The City or the County shall direct that any or all of its respective public agencies which propose projects within Conservation Area boundaries shall provide to the Authority notice of such projects and shall then, upon request of the Authority, provide plans and specifications for the purpose of community review and comment. Said notice shall be provided a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the advertisement for bids for the construction of such projects.

B. Specific Regulations

1. Regulations Applicable to All Properties

- a. Statement of Purpose - A basic purpose of this Plan, in promoting rehabilitation and conservation within James Lee is to provide standards for improvements which will serve the goals and objectives of the community. All improvements shall reflect

quality in design, materials, and techniques. None of the regulations contained herein shall be construed to release any developer, owner, or other individual from required conformance to all applicable Fairfax County and City of Falls Church regulations; controls, and ordinances.

b. Easements

- i. Easements for a public purpose may be dedicated by property owners.
- ii. In Fairfax County, no building, improvement, fence, or any other barrier shall be erected on any pedestrian pathway easement.

- c. CITY: Street Standards - New or improved public street rights-of-way shall meet City standards. Private service and access drives will be wide enough to handle the particular function assigned and shall comply with City of Falls Church codes and ordinances. Where applicable design and traffic control provisions should be made to prohibit through-trucks from entering the project area. All newly constructed private streets shall be developed with curb, gutters and drainage.

COUNTY: Street Standards - New or improved public street rights-of-way shall meet Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation standards where possible. Private service and access drives will be wide enough to handle the particular function assigned and shall codes and ordinances. Design and traffic control provisions should be made to prohibit through-trucks from entering the project area. All newly constructed private streets shall be developed with curb and gutters.

CITY AND COUNTY: All streets shall also be developed so as to address the following objectives:

- i. adequate vehicular and pedestrian circulation into and through the Conservation Area;
 - ii. separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, where feasible;
 - iii. reasonable access to and egress from all land uses in an efficient manner;
 - iv. minimum obstruction to efficient traffic flow on all streets in the Conservation Area;
 - v. the use of curb cuts to facilitate bicycle and handicapped movement.
- d. CITY: Garbage and Rubbish - the following regulations shall apply to the removal of garbage, rubbish, and litter by property owners. It shall be unlawful for the owner of any property, after having been notified by the City Zoning Administrator or by the Fairfax County Health Director, to fail to remove any and all garbage, rubbish, litter, or any other substances which have caused the premise to become unclean, unsightly, unsanitary, obnoxious, or a blight to the community. Fairfax County and the City of Falls Church have a working agreement regarding health services for the City. When the County Health Director has determined that a violation exists in the City, he shall notify the owner of the land or lot(s) in accordance with the Fairfax County and Falls Church City Codes. If such garbage, rubbish, litter, or other substances are not removed, the City Manager or his authorized agent shall make or cause to make inspections of the building

or premise, for the purpose of ascertaining and causing to be corrected any conditions liable to cause any violation of the intent of the City Code; and shall be authorized to enter any building or premises in the City at any reasonable time, upon display of proper identification.

COUNTY: Garbage and Rubbish - The following regulations shall apply to the removal of garbage, rubbish, and litter by property owners. It shall be unlawful for the owner of any property, after having been notified by the Fairfax County Health Director, to fail to remove any and all garbage, rubbish, litter or any other substances which have caused the premise to become unclean, unsightly, unsanitary, obnoxious, or a blight to the community. When the County Health Director has determined that a violation exists, he shall notify the owner of the land or lot(s) in accordance with the Fairfax County Code. If such garbage, rubbish, litter or other substances are not removed, the Fairfax County Director of Public Works shall cause removal and assess the cost and expense against the owner of such property, as provided in the County Code.

2. Regulations Applicable to Residential Areas

- a. CITY AND COUNTY: Land Use - The maximum density and use of the land within the Conservation Area shall be the same as that specified on the official Zoning Maps of the City of Falls Church and Fairfax County.
- b. CITY: Home Improvement Loan and Grant Recipients - Those property owners receiving loans or grants from the Authority for the rehabilitation of their properties shall upgrade such properties to conform with HUD Property Rehabilitation Standards unless waived by the Authority and the City; to conform with housing

hygiene and building codes applicable in the City of Falls Church unless waived by the appropriate City body pursuant to applicable laws and regulations; and to conform to the Fairfax County Home Improvement Loan and Grant Program Policy and Procedures Manual.

COUNTY: Home Improvement Loan and Grant Recipients - Those owners receiving loans and grants from the Authority for the rehabilitation of their properties shall upgrade such properties to conform with HUD Property Rehabilitation Standards unless waived by the Authority; to conform with housing hygiene and building codes applicable in Fairfax County unless waived by the appropriate County body pursuant to applicable laws and regulations; and to conform to the Fairfax County Home Improvement Loan and Grant Program Policy and Procedures Manual.

3. Regulations Applicable to Neighborhood Commercial & Institutional Facilities

The following objectives shall be met by any new commercial or institutional development within the Conservation Area:

- a. The structures, signing, and lighting shall be innovatively designed to be compatible in scale and character with the neighborhood;
- b. The commercial and institutional uses shall be arranged in such a manner that they will not adversely affect other uses;
- c. Surface parking lots approved subsequent to this agreement shall be screened from public streets by walls or solid landscaping material at least three and one-half (3.5) feet in height; and,
- d. Adequate and safe pedestrian access to the commercial or institutional development shall be available from within the community.

CITY: The intensity of land use for non-residential areas of the City within the Conservation Area boundaries shall conform to that specified in the Official Zoning Map of the City of Falls Church.

COUNTY: The intensity of land use for non-residential areas of the County within the Conservation Area boundaries shall conform to that specified in the Official Zoning Map of Fairfax County.

4. Regulations Applicable to Public and Quasi-Public Areas and Facilities
 - a. Community Center - The existing community center may be expanded or upgraded under the Conservation Plan. The planning and design for improvements or additions to this facility will be under the control and direction of the James Lee Community Center Advisory Board, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and other County agencies. Additions to the facility must comply with all applicable County codes and ordinances.
 - b. Park and Playground Development - Public open spaces may be provided under the Conservation Plan for both active and passive recreation use by all age groups. Only incidental structures to serve parks and recreational uses will be permitted in areas designated for parks and playgrounds. Improvements may include, but are not necessarily limited to, rain shelters, permanent playground equipment, park furniture, an amphitheatre, and landscaping. Acquisition of necessary property in the Conservation Area located in Fairfax County, for public open space shall be undertaken pursuant to Sections V and VIII of this Plan and will be turned over to the Fairfax County Park Authority for design, implementation, and maintenance.
 - c. Sidewalks - Whenever legally feasible, continuous sidewalk will be constructed in the Conservation Area on at least one side of the street when that road is widened or improved.

D. Duration of Controls, Regulations, and Standards

The controls set out in the Plan are compatible with existing County and City Codes. Rehabilitation and new construction within the Conservation Area will, for a period of twenty-five (25) years from the date of approval of this Plan by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the Falls Church City Council, be subject to these controls, regulations and standards, and to any more restrictive provisions which may be contained in this Plan. Any controls imposed in disposition documents relating to those properties acquired by the Authority will run for their stated time period.

IX. PROCEDURE FOR PLAN AMENDMENT

- A. All proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Authority for the purpose of holding a public hearing to provide the opportunity for residents in the Conservation Area and all other affected parties to voice their views on the proposal. The Authority shall then submit the amendment and its recommendations to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the Falls Church City Council for final action.
- B. Any zoning plan, master plan, or comprehensive plan amendment that requires an amendment to the Conservation Plan shall upon receiving the recommendations of the Authority after public hearing require only the final action of the governing body in which jurisdiction the subject property is located.

X. TIME LIMITATIONS

There is no stated limitation on the length of time within which the program activities must be completed.

XI. PROGRAM FUNDING

Annual appropriations, if any, available for implementation of the Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan shall be approved by the Authority.

the City Council, and the Board of Supervisors prior to each program year. Funds from all sources allowable under Virginia law may be appropriated to be spent on approved program activities. The County Executive shall have the authority to shift County funding, as necessary, from one approved project to another within the County's portion of the Conservation Area during the program year. The City Manager shall have parallel authority within the City's portion of the Conservation Area.